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Sustainable Integrated Development & Biodiversity Conservation In the Grenadine Islands (St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada)

Volume 1, Issue 1

Sustainable Grenadines News

Project launch and office opening

The 23rd of November 2004 saw the fruition of two years of planning with the official launching of the Sustainable Grenadines Project in Clifton Union Island. The office is located upstairs Mitchell's Hardware. The launch coincided with the annual meeting of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is the project core, it comprises representatives from: UWI CERMES, CCA, CEC, PPL, Government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada, and seven Grenadines NGO's or private sector representatives, one from each inhabited island.

The ceremony was attended

by; parliamentary representative for the southern Grenadines the Hon. Terrance Ollivierre, Hon. Edwin Snagg Senator with responsibilities for Grenadines Affairs, Mr. Dennis Gay, Ministry of Carriacou & Petite Martinique Affairs, and Mr. Jens Ambsdorf, CEO



Unveiling the project logo Hon. Edwin Snagg

of The Lighthouse Foundation which is the main sponsor of the project.

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Address by Mr. Dennis, Gay Rep. Ministry of Carriacou & Petite Martinique Affairs

It is my distinct pleasure to be here today and to bring you the greetings and congratulations of the Honorable Elvin G. Nimrod, Minister of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs and the Government and people of the state of Grenada.

The Government and people of Grenada welcome the second phase of the Sustainable Integrated Development and Biodiversity Conservation Project in the Grenadine Islands. This project is very timely as it seeks to preserve our natural resources so that they will be available for future generations. It is for this reason

that the Government pledges its full support to the project as reflected in its commitment given at the cabinet level in 2003.

We are aware that the archipelago of the Grenadines with its numerous rocks and cays of volcanic and limestone nature presents one of the most picturesque sites any human being can behold. Additionally, the climate, flora and fauna, and scenery of these islands are unique and so fascinating that persons discovering our island for the first time feel compelled to return.

The Grenadine Bank on which the Project will be executed extends some one hundred and twenty kilometers between Grenada and St. Vincent. The diversity in the habitation ranging from human life to that of exquisite and exotic species of wild life; which make eco-tourism and nature tourism the focus of the niche market for our area.

We are pleased to know that the goal of this second (2nd) phase of the project seeks to address the social and economic well-being of the people who live in the area, and at the same time contribute to

Mr. Dennis Gay, Rep. Ministry of Carriacou & Petite Martinique Affairs con't

the natural economics and conservation of biodiversity.

We are forever thankful to God for his blessings, and for the further manifestation of himself in the people of this region, which is evident in the hospitality and peacefulness that is perpetually present here.

The government of Grenada therefore, expresses its gratitude to The Lighthouse Foundation of Germany for the sponsorship of this project in the sum of US\$750,000) over a period of five years which is so vital to the economy of our region.

Our gratitude and commendation are also extended to the Government of St.

Vincent and the Grenadines, the University of the West Indies and all other organizations and institutions that are partners and have committed to the success of this project. Special recognition is given to the executive and members of the Carriacou Environmental Committee for the major role that they had played and will continue to play in ensuring the successful implementation of the project.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the staff of the project office and to encourage you to work diligently in ensuring the proper implementation of the project for the good of our region.

In closing, therefore, I once again extend



Mr. Dennis Gay and Hon. Terrance Ollivierre

the profound thanks of the Government and people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique to everyone who is involved in one way or another.

Reef check back in the Grenadines

The Amadis project is an international marine conservation and education expedition lead by a diverse team of five volunteers consisting of scientists, a journalist and a film maker. They work together educating local communities about the current decline of the coral reef health. Using a fully outfitted research yacht. They will provide training in 'Reef Check' methods and provide equipment needed for local government agencies and communities to engage in the monitoring of

their own marine resources.

The Amadis project will assist the Sustainable Grenadine Project in implementing their strategic plan by allowing for the acquisition and distribution of information on the importance of coral reefs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines which are critical to coastal protection, habitats for marine life, as well as the continued success of tourism here. The sustainable Grenadines Project has already agreed to act as a coordinator for Reef Check within

"The project will also provide training... on survey methods and the practical use of Reef Check data in local management and marine education"

the country. The office will be responsible for data management review and transmission of data to the Fisheries Division, Reef Check, and dissemination of results to the public annually.

Address by Hon. Edwin Snagg, Senator with responsibility for Grenadines Affairs

There is need for a comprehensive study of the ecosystems of the Grenadines and how they are being affected by man-made factors and natural phenomena. Some studies have been done but it is the hope that this project will provide the people of the Grenadines with a greater understanding of their biodiversity.

Those of us born in the 1950's can attest to the fact that we simply walked at the edge of Richmond Bay and picked up conch and roasted them right on the beach...that is just to remind us how

much change our environment has experienced. Our environment provided our sustenance, our livelihood, our fun and our games. The experiences, I mentioned not only applied to us in Union Island but the same existed in all other Grenadine Islands.

Palm Island Resort is a model of the transformation, it provided space for rearing cattle and mosquitoes, and on its reefs the best rock fish were caught. Many residents of our previous generations never visited the Tobago Cays and to us

as boys it was just a set of uninhabited islands. The area had all the time for its corals to grow undisturbed, it fishes flourished and all



Mr. Dennis Gay and Hon. Edwin Snagg

Bequia Rotary Club attends coaching program for sailors

Two young men, Kevin and Edwin Ollivierre from Bequia Rotary Club were sponsored by the Sustainable Grenadines Project to participate in a coaching program for sailors recently held in Trinidad from the 16th to 23rd December.

There were sixteen coaches from St Lucia, Barbados, Trinidad and Bequia. Apart from the usual sailing techniques, the course dealt primarily with the structuring of daily programs for youths. Each training course is expected to last several weeks and each day should bring out another aspect of training. According to Chester Peters of the Bequia Rotary Club,

'It is practical, informative and designed to keep the interest of young sailors in every session. It is the first time that they have been exposed to such a level of training and they feel that they are better prepared to move our program forward. Over the years, our sailors learnt how to sail a boat. They did this by climbing aboard and learning from more experience sailors. They adapted well to this form of practical training. According to them, this new avenue is exciting and enhances what they already know about boats.'

The Club is about to begin training for

the North American Championship in June.

The program can be extended to other Islands and Kevin and Edwin can assist in the setting up these programs.



Address by Hon. Edwin Snagg, Senator with responsibility for Grenadines Affairs con't

the other marine life that went with serene existence of nature at its best; that period when it's undisturbed.

We now have a larger population and a greater need for human fulfillment both physical and otherwise from the same resources. A lack of concern for the preservation of our environment is due to a span wherein education was not forthcoming on that issue. We took nature for granted, it was a never ending productive machine to be exploited and in some cases over-exploited, for food and for money. I ask the question, shall we blame those who went before for not instilling in us the benefit of conservation by protection and controlled use? No not at all, they knew it only from their instinct, but we now know it from a scientific point of

view.

Fortunately for us, we have islands with small areas. Bequia and Carriacou, being the largest at the ends. One may wonder what the fortune is. We do not have room for many vehicles thus curbing the pollution, no room for large factories, continuous trade winds that the little pollution is quickly blown out to sea. We pose our own threat of pollution by the harboring of materials alien to these communities that have now found its way into the mainstream of our lives. There was very little to throw away in the Grenadines except bottles. The animals took care of the provision skins and remnants of food. The pig pan was a feature at various households, corn husks and pea shells had a ready market, tinned

stuff was not a feature at the Grenadine table. In fact, our garbage was limited. Today we have bottles and other leaded products and from the imported garbage, God

"We have a golden opportunity with the wealth of information available at the click of the switch and the shift of the mouse..."

knows what else find its way into our soils and into the system.

I note with joy the support of mini projects for NGOs,

These affect the immediate lives of our people and build the capacity of the NGOs, for greater projects. However, major issues confront us. The rapid coastal erosion of the Big Sand/ Rich-

mond area and I am sure that other islands of the Grenadines chain have experienced that same phenomenon. Various factors are blamed, climate changes resulting in sea level rise and other factors which the layman like me may not understand. A charge however, must be made, that this project provide the advice and direction so badly needed by both governments and our people. It may well be that fusion of the minds of the various NGOs can present guidance to the Steering Committee and the PIU. The project managers' vigilance and that of other staff is required in this sensitive project.

The role of the private sector as a stake-

holder cannot be overemphasized, the cooperation of all is needed now, and that now refers to yesterday. The schools of the Grenadines must have the benefit of documentation and findings of the project. NGOs and the government must ensure that the science classes understand the project as it goes through its phases, while education on the environment takes a more holistic approach embracing the communities.

Whenever there is a unified approach much is always achieved...Our history and our culture is the same, our livelihood is the same. Nature has bonded us in a way that we cannot separate the

biodiversity of Carriacou from that of Bequia. The geologist say it is but one volcanic mass with protrusions above sea level called islands. I don't know, but what I do know is that we are one and the same, Massa Bull and Massa Cow. The funding of the project cannot be commended enough but I leave that to the vote of thanks. I however, reiterate the support of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, wish that you make good use of your beautiful office space as provided by our Government and wish the project all success.

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Protect and Preserve our Environment and Livelihood

[http://cermes.cavehill.uwi.edu/
susgrenadinesnew.html](http://cermes.cavehill.uwi.edu/susgrenadinesnew.html)



Steering Committee members at the annual meeting from left; Father Mark Da Silva (MEDO), Mr. Casper Smith (Project Manager), Mr. Jonathon Patrice (Project Administrator), Ms Virginia Fleary-Noel (Carriacou Environmental Committee), Mr. Hansel Henry (Canouan Island Council), Mr. Brian Richards (Mustique Island Company), Mr. Benson Patrice (observer), Mr. Max Nagel (Grenada SCUBA Divers Association, Ms Lydia Ollivierre (Anglican Youth Group of Bequia), Dr. Robin Mahon (CERMES UWI), Mr. Ashwa Stewart (Union Is. Museum and Ecological Society), Ms. Cecelia St. Ignac (Petite Martinique New Woman's Movement), Mr. Sylvester Tannis (Administrator, Bequia), Ms. Mary De Roche (Observer), Mr. Bentley Browne (Projects Promotion Ltd.), Missing - Mr. Dennis Gay (Rep. Min. CPM Affairs)

5th Congress on Caribbean Biodiversity – January 25-28, 2005

The Sustainable Grenadine Project is a binational project involving the Grenadine islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada. The project aims to develop a functioning participatory co-management framework for integrated sustainable development in the Grenadines.

The Sustainable Grenadine Project was represented at the Fifth Caribbean Biodiversity Congress held in the Dominican Republic, January 25-28, 2005. The Project Manager Mr. Casper Smith attended the conference in which he delivered a 20 minute presentation on the Sustainable Grenadine Project.

The congress is a meeting of specialists from numerous fields of knowledge and those working towards the protection of biodiversity. Presentations were in the areas of: systematics, biogeography, ecology, conservation, bioethics, bio-safety, invasive species, environmental educa-

tion, recycling, protected areas, sustainable development, and natural resources management

During this symposium the results of systematics, biology, ecology, critical habitat and species management of coastal and marine species were presented. Works were discussed on marine ecological planning and baseline studies for the integrated management of coastal marine zones, including studies on the current status of marine mammals in the Caribbean.

The conference was sponsored by The Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD), the Iberoamerican University (UNIBE), Grupo Jaragua (GJ), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ), Harvard University and the Dominican Environmental Consortium (CAD).

Mr. Smith had the opportunity to liaise



Project Manager, Mr. Casper Smith Presenting

and networks with individuals from many organizations with an active interest in Caribbean biodiversity conservation. Donors expressed interest in the project and positive spin-off is expected.