

Sustainable Grenadines News

Who is doing what this year?

Five mini-projects were awarded for 2007 to Community Based Organisations in the Grenadines. These mini-projects are expected to build the capacity of these groups in organisational management skills such as project planning, monitoring and evaluation, accounting, and report writing. The project will give the groups the 'learning by doing' experience of implementing projects with the hope that they can attract larger funding in the future.

Capacity building for the groups will also include an institutional assessment which seeks to identify their weaknesses and strengths. This will be followed up with technical assistance and guidance in the weak areas. Groups will be able to function more productively while guiding the social, economic and environmental development of the Grenadines.

The projects for 2007 are:

- The Bequia Coastal Areas Enhancement Project to be implemented by the Paget Farm

Government School 4-H Club in Bequia.

- The Protection and Beautification of Saline Beach by the Mayreau Regatta and Sporting Committee
- The Coastal Preservation and Enhancement Project by the Petite Martinique Catholic Youth Movement and the Petite Martinique Women's Organisation
- The Coastal Plastics Reduction Project by the Union Island Environmental Attackers
- The Fort Murray Enhancement Project by the Union Island Museum and Ecological Society.

The projects were selected based on their relevance to coastal and marine conservation and sustainable use, feasible for implementation within one year, community involvement and whether they are sustainable and manageable.

Healthy Mangroves, Healthy People!

World Wetlands Day was on Friday February 2nd, 2007. In Union Island it was celebrated with activities spearheaded by the Union Island Environmental Attackers and other local NGOs. Activities included a clean-up of the Ashton Lagoon – one of the largest remaining mangrove sites in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a newscast about the significance of wetlands and the importance of mangroves to livelihoods. There was also barbeque for volunteers in the day's activities.



A total of 75 persons were involved in the cleanup with the support of students and teachers of the two primary schools and the Union Island Secondary School. Representatives from the Caribbean Environment Health Institute (CEHI), Central Water and Sewerage Authority, Public Health in St. Vincent and the

Grenadines Project and the Ministry of Health and the Environment. The clean up falls within the context of a proposed wetlands restoration project in Union Island.

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Organisation is key

Project staff met with water taxi operators in Bequia to help determine their way forward as marine resource users and stakeholders in the tourism product of Bequia. The group met on Wednesday February 7th along with other interested persons and government representatives to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis. One of the outcomes was the formation of a Bequia Water Taxi Association from which other issues facing operators will be tackled. They have agreed to form an interim executive committee to move the process forward.

This initiative by the operators should be commended since their livelihoods and the tourism sector are seen as the main beneficiaries of coming together.



What is your vision?

The Sustainable Grenadines Project held its first workshop for 2007 in Bequia at the Rotary Centre, Lower Bay. The workshop focussed on Strategic Planning for Community based organisations and Non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Participants were exposed to the tools and skills necessary to develop purpose, mission and vision statements for their organisations. Participants adopted the approach of working as an NGO for the purpose of the workshop, which they called the Grenadines Association for Community Group Development. Many expressed the



interest in bringing such a group into being. Groups were taught how to get the necessary information for developing their statements through individual brainstorming and group consensus. Additionally, they were introduced to skills for identifying their stakeholders and action planning with Specific Measurable Action-oriented Realistic Time-bound (SMART) objectives. Participants expressed gratitude for this workshop stating that it was important to the development of their groups and for individual growth. The workshop was facilitated by Sharon Almerigi from People Dynamics Associates and was supported by The Nature Conservancy.

MPA-ME Update

The results of the CERMES project on evaluating the management effectiveness of the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) along with other marine protected areas in Jamaica and Belize were shared at meetings in Union Island (31 January 2007) and Kingstown (1 February 2007).

The Union Island meeting, arranged by the TCMP office, was held at the Sustainable Grenadines conference room. The Kingstown meeting was arranged by the Fisheries Division and held in their conference room.

Patrick McConney provided an overview of the regional project and led a discussion on the other project sites, adaptive management and lessons learned. Maria

Pena presented the results of the TCMP management evaluation.

Participants were informed that the project end date is 31 March 2007 but a no-cost extension to 31 July 2007 had been approved to facilitate the production of training materials and allow enough time to see results from adaptive management.



The completed TCMP evaluation report and associated results sharing meeting report are available for download from the CERMES website.

Disasters don't discriminate

Representatives from the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) met with the community in Mayreau on Wednesday March 22nd and Union Island on Thursday March 23rd to determine the necessary structures at the community level for managing hazards and disasters. Director for Grenadines Affairs, Senator Edwin Snagg in his opening remarks reminded the community that disasters do not discriminate on any grounds.

Mr. Howie Prince noted that the success of NEMO depended on the community involvement since communities have the local knowledge necessary for effective disaster management planning. He drew an important parallel in that from biblical times disasters were present and planning was promoted, such as with Noah

and the ark. Participants were informed of the many plans for training and development available to volunteers of the community disaster management committee as well as equipment.

Participants were encouraged to share their views on the major issues facing the islands especially those which can worsen the impact of the hazards. The issue of improper garbage disposal featured prominently in the discussions. Emphasis was placed on the fact that food establishments distribute styrofoam containers without much care for their proper disposal such as adequate garbage bins. Consumers were also held responsible for making this problem worse by their current practices. The garbage results in the blocking of drains but also makes the environs unsightly and unhealthy. Participants agreed that behaviours and attitudes needed to change.

Our children love corals

The final phase of the People and Coral Project: Evaluation of the use of the workbook, took place from January 29th to February 7th 2007. Katherine Blackman of CERMES began her journey from the north of Grenada through the Grenadines to the South of St. Vincent interviewing the teachers from the previous workshop and a total of ninety students who were exposed to the workbook.



The aim was to gain insight into their perception and experience with the workbook and to provide any suggestions for its improvement. While the project is scheduled to end in February 2007, future work is required to determine whether the use of the workbook has led to changes in behaviour of the students over time and whether sharing the knowledge with friends and family has changed any attitudes or behaviours of his/her family/friends towards the environment.

Recommendations were made to continue the use of the workbook in primary schools and also a framework for establishing a coral reef education program in primary schools.

While using the workbook, two schools (Mustique Primary School and Calliaqua Anglican Primary School) organised a beach clean up at one of their neighbouring beaches with the aim of protecting the reefs through preventing pollution of the ocean.



The Sustainable Grenadines Project is implemented through collaboration among:

- The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), UWI, Barbados
- The Carriacou Environmental Committee, Grenada
- Projects Promotion Lt., St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- The Governments of Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Numerous Grenadines NGOs.

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