

Sustainable Grenadines News

Ashton Lagoon Restoration: A Participatory Process

The Ashton Lagoon Participatory Planning Workshop was held from April 22nd to 24th at the St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Union Island. This workshop was attended by community members, government officials, local, regional and international marine, wetland, birdlife and coral reef ecologists, fishermen and a coastal engineer.



The Director of Grenadines Affairs, Hon. Edwin Snagg made opening remarks on day one in which he indicated that the Government was open to ideas for the area.

The aim of the planning workshop was the development of a restoration and sustainable use plan for the Ashton Lagoon area. The workshop was aimed at determining the Union Island and Vincentian communities' vision for sustainable use of the La-

goon.

The main outputs from this one-year planning phase of the Ashton Lagoon Restoration Project will be a restoration and sustainable use plan and funding proposals to carry out the work. Already on December 4th - 9th, 2006, the core project planners and members of BirdLife International, held a series of planning meetings and field visits in Grenada, Carriacou, St. Vincent and Union Island. In those meetings the local community (especially the fishing community and local NGOs) expressed a keen interest and desire to restore the lagoon and pursue sustainable development options like mariculture and ecotourism.



Information on the workshop was shared in the Ashton community at their annual maroon festival.

Conservation Training Week

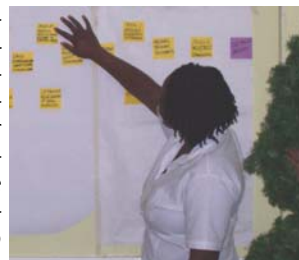
Katrina Collins and Magdalene McIntosh (from the Union Island Environmental Attackers and the Bayaleau Development Committee Inc. respectively) along with project staff took part in the Conservation Training Week in Jamaica from April 30th to May 4th.

The week's activities related to human resources management, protected area planning and management and project management. Valuable information and incite was gained related to personal/self analysis, defining one's strengths and weaknesses and adjusting one's approach when dealing with varying personality types.

The training on protected area planning and management sparked sustainable community-

based tourism project ideas which may be introduced to the communities for their consideration.

The emphasis on community-based activities was featured in these sessions with examples from across Jamaica. This was especially important for the Bayaleau Development Committee (BDC Inc.) which is currently involved in a cultural/historical project with trail development as a complementary component. The ideas for community management can be discussed and incorporated into their project.



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TCMP Ranger Training

Hyron Joseph, Albert Hanson and Jason Alexander from the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) were the recipients of a training attachment to the Soufriere Marine Management Association Inc., St. Lucia from June 18 – 22, 2007. The training equipped the rangers with practical skills in the areas of rangers' duties and responsibilities, buoy maintenance, monitoring and research, fee collection and accounting.

The rangers are expected to return to the TCMP to put this training into practice and share their knowledge with the other rangers. The experiences of the TCMP will be worthwhile for the future development and management of protected areas in the region.

This training attachment was timely given the recent launch of the TCMP in December of 2006. The attachment was made possible through the project's attachment and exchanges programme that is aimed at giving its local partner groups practical experience in operational management through the learning by doing approach.

Vincy Nature Show

The Sustainable Grenadines Project mounted a display on its current work and core activities at the Vincy Nature Show on April 20th – 21st at the Old Library in St. Vincent. The Show was organized by the Environmental Education Committee headed by Gregory Jean from the Ministry of Education's Environmental Services Unit.



The Central Water and Sewage Authority focused on composting in their display while the Forestry Department had various trees on display which aid in stabilizing slopes along with ornamentals.



The Ozone was the topic of the Environmental Services Unit's display booth while the National Emergency Management Office had various brochures and leaflets on the hazards affecting the island as well as safety information.



The event was the first of its kind and in this way it may be regarded as a success in its own right. This activity was a step towards raising the awareness of Vincenians on the value of the environment and the various issues facing the country and the Caribbean as a whole.

Mr. Jean expressed disappointment at the somewhat low turnout to the event but is hopeful that the next Vincy Nature Show will attract the attention of all sectors of society.

Communication: A Must!

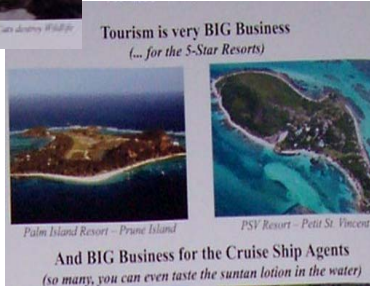
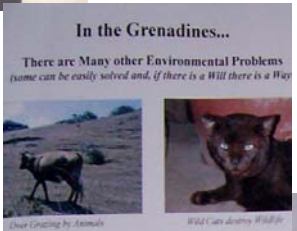
Participants from across the Grenadines converged in Carriacou on May 2nd-3rd for the Project's Effective Communication skills workshop. This workshop was birthed from the results of the institutional self-assessment of nine community groups. It was found that many groups lacked the skills necessary to communicate ideas and displeasure which often led to conflict and the break up of the organisation.

The workshop was facilitated by Mrs. Payne Banfield who ably led participants through the process of identifying informal and formal communication types, practical applications through her wealth of experience and anecdotes. Team building was also promoted through the various exercises in which participants were engaged. Groups were involved in activities which encouraged them to listen to others; a major part of the communication process.



The opening ceremony featured addresses from the Medical Officer of Health Dr. Roger Duncan and the Environmental Services Coordinator, Edmund Jackson.

Other displays came from Fr. Mark DaSilva who presented the case of the Grenadines along the lines of employment, tourism and environmental issues among other things. These are believed to be issues which need the attention of all sectors of society for sustainable development to be a reality and be beneficial to locals.



Social Investment Fund: Mayreau on the move

The Social Investment Fund (SIF) paid Mayreau several visits in their attempt to extend the arm of social development to that community. The many issues facing the island came to the fore when SIF personnel met with community groups on May 19th. Issues such as land ownership, garbage disposal, water security, sports and culture were discussed.

At present, community members are developing a project proposal to meet the need for greater water security. There has also been a project approved which is in its initial stages to facilitate sports and culture on the island. The project will see the development of the hard court area with facilities to encourage

the various festivities and traditional games. One expectation is for the several groups to form an umbrella organisation from which all major projects on the island can be administered. Groups have agreed in principle to such an arrangement and are currently working on the approach they will take.

Meanwhile, Union Island is in the process of forming an umbrella organisation to meet the needs of the island as a whole following a similar meeting on May 19th. The process on Union Island has been a rocky one with little surprise given the large number of groups that need to be represented.

The project will need to inject resources into such a process if the group is to have a healthy start and be sustainable.

Greener Water Taxis?

Water taxi operators in the Grenadines have their own manual created specifically for them on green boat practices. This manual was produced under the water taxi project which was implemented by the Carriacou Environmental Committee.

The information in the book was compiled by Dominique Lizama and Susan Mahon with the assistance of water taxi operators. The book contains best practices on boat and engine maintenance, fuel and oil, safety equipment, waste management and anchoring.

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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