

Sustainable Grenadines News

Garbage at the Coast Chokes

This was the theme for St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the annual International Coastal Cleanup. This year the islands of the Grenadines from Bequia to Carriacou under the Sustainable Grenadines Project joined forces with St. Vincent and Grenada in a concerted effort to clean up the coast environment. Each island undertook activities to this end and provided preliminary reports on their effort.

In Union Island there were approximately 83 volunteers most of whom were students of the Mary Hutchinson and Stephanie Browne Primary Schools and the Union Island 4-H Club. A total estimated weight of 710 pounds was collected over a distance of approximately 2 miles. There were two main sponsors of the activity; Karib Kable provided water, 70 garbage bags, 100 pairs of gloves and 24 t-shirts for Union Island while the Sustainable Grenadines Project donated over 300 t-shirts, over 500 garbage bags and 400 pairs of gloves to par-



ticipants across the Grenadines.

In Bequia, the effort was supported by over 60 volunteers and was concentrated in three main areas; Port Elizabeth, Spring and Paget Farm. Bequia. Over 165 bags were collected in the Jeff Gregg area of Paget Farm. Larger items like parts from machines and building materials were lifted directly onto a truck. At Spring and Port Elizabeth approximately 32 and 12 bags were collected respectively. Most of the garbage retrieved was related to shoreline or recreational activities



which included 943 food wrappers and containers and 805 plastic bottles. Also of concern were the 534 oil/lube bottles collected. In Mustique, activities began on Friday 21st September, 2007 with brief

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TCMP Update

The Tobago Cays Marine Park in conjunction with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) OPAAL project held a proposal writing workshop in St. Vincent from July 16th to 20th. The overarching aim of the workshop was to teach participants how to prepare 'bankable' project proposals. The training was facilitated by Mr. David Popo and Ms. Tecla Fontenard from the OECS.

A draft project proposal for a 'Tobago Cays Sustainable Livelihoods Project' was developed in this workshop and a technical review group including Fr. Andrew Roache, Alexcia Cooke, and OECS-OPAAL staff met at the OECS Secretariat in St. Lucia to finalise the proposal.

The project is worth US\$88,965.00 with funding from the OECS Small Grants Facility valued at US\$49,538 and in-kind and financial support from the TCMP at US\$32,160 being the major contributors to the project. The project is targeted at the major resource users of the park; water taxi operators, vendors, fishermen. Included are new livelihood opportunities in the areas of art and craft and tour guiding.

Litter Blindness or Litter Magicians in the Grenadines?

These were two of the three conditions described by Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA) representative Greg Francois as he addressed the issue of solid waste disposal in Canouan. In his address Mr. Francois warned against what he calls:

Litter Blindness – given a number of times in passing garbage by, people no longer see the garbage around them.

Litter Magician – as the rainy season comes the litter is concealed by vegetation and it seems to disappear. With the onset of the dry season, it all becomes visible

Not in my backyard syndrome– People will litter in someone else's surroundings since it is not theirs failing to recognize that the consequences will affect them as well. An example he gave was that when rats breed in one's backyard, they do not stay there but begin to infest the neighbours also.

Mr. Greg Francois encouraged the islanders to take stock of their situation. He encouraged them not to lose hope which seems to be the

case when considering the magnitude of the litter problem on the island.

Mr. Quow, Solid Waste Manager with CWSA pointed out that many of the persons living on Canouan were not from the island but this should not give licence to litter indiscriminately. He encouraged those present to see Canouan as part of the country of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and to take pride in keeping their home and environment in a healthy state. Similar sentiments were echoed by chairperson of the meeting Mrs. Joan Ryan, Public Relations Officer at the CWSA.

Alexcia Cooke from the Sustainable Grenadines Project was also present at this meeting and issued an invitation to the public to join the clean up effort on September 15th. She highlighted the fact that garbage at the coast affects not only marine life but also the health of the people who use the coast for recreational and livelihood activities. She also noted that litter at the highest point on the island will ultimately reach the coast and people need to be better stewards for their environment.

Garbage at the Coast Chokes Cont'd

remarks to volunteers highlighting the need for and importance of such an activity, effects of coastal pollution and ways to prevent it. An appreciation of this it is believed will encourage people to be better stewards of their environment. The activity was led by the Principal of the Mustique Primary School and Ty Kovach and Simon Humphrey of the Mustique Company with over 50 volunteers including students and teachers of the primary school, parents and villagers. Three beaches were cleaned producing in total 23 bags with an estimated weight of 69 pounds. The garbage collected on the three areas were mostly related to recreational activities with some dumping from the construction industry being evident.

Canouan undertook to clean up the entire village on Saturday September 22nd. Given the magnitude of that task, no records were kept of the types of garbage collected.

The activity in Mayreau was a great success. It revealed that much of the garbage had their origin at sea in the form of plastics and mainly plastic bottles. They collected 53 bags of garbage weighing approximately 318 lbs from 5 different beaches. The effort was supported by approximately 50 volunteers and was spearheaded by



the Mayreau Regatta and Sporting Committee. The villagers also used the opportunity to clean the village.

On Saturday September 22nd 55 volunteers from Petite Martinique, clad in their SusGren cleanup t-shirts cleaned the main beach of Sanchez and the community. The team as part

of a greater environmental drive planted over 30 trees. These included coconut, almond, grapes, nymph and seaside mahoe trees. The volunteers were mainly from the local non-governmental organization called the Petite Martinique Catholic Youth Movement, community members and volunteers from Carriacou. 45 bags of garbage were collected in this effort which was coordinated by the Carriacou Environmental Committee.



Carriacou was a hive of activity when 160 volunteers descended on seven coastal communities across the island on Saturday September 15th. The cleanup effort was concentrated in Harvey Vale Beach, Bogles, Belvedere, Dover, Limlair, Bayaleau and Windward Beach. Villagers used the opportunity to clean their surroundings, roadsides and to get rid of stockpiled garbage. The boat

builders of windward the main boat building community in Carriacou got a much need face-lift to their dockyard by burning the remains of old boats and rotting wood.

The dive shops of Carriacou under the Padi Aware Project were also engaged in similar activities. For these dive shops this has become an annual activity. Over 240 garbage bags and 30 large feed bags were collected. This was by no means the extent of garbage collected as stoves, batteries and building materials from hurricane-damaged homes were piled onto trucks.



Sustainable Traditions for Uncertain Times

The Paget Farm Sports Cultural and Environmental Organization has teamed up with the R.I.P.P.L.E.S. group to record and preserve the oral history and traditions of Bequia.

Ms. Leah Belmar, coordinator for the R.I.P.P.L.E.S group and this project explained that the rationale for the project took into consideration that as modernisation rapidly overtakes what "used to be", the younger generation has become more ignorant of the traditional ways of doing things. The likelihood of losing such vital information makes it necessary to have it documented for future generations. She drew the example of what would happen if there was a nationwide shortage of laundry bleach, an oil crisis that produced power outages, lack of cooking gas and refrigeration as we know

the project entitled **Folkways of Bequia**.

The project was sponsored by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) within the framework of their Youth Visioning for Island Living, and the further implementation of its Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, this project began in the first quarter of 2007. After the purchase of a video camera and training for conducting interviews and operation of the equipment, the youth organized several cheer-giving visits to the elderly at their homes in Bequia. They videotaped them as they told their stories, which at times revealed practices and items unheard of. They also filmed cassava production at the two estates, and corn grinding in a traditional mill.



Ms. Belmar also noted that medicinal plants and their uses and the preservation of the knowledge of traditional salting and drying of fish were included for documentation under the project. The story of Bequia whaling is also considered to be of tremendous importance.

The documentary will be aired on the Bequia community radio station and local television. It is hoped that the project will be completed and aired to coincide with the Nation's October 27th anniversary of its independence.



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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