

Sustainable Grenadines News

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Grenadine Hoteliers discussed Environmentally Friendly Practices.

The Grenadines Green Hotels Workshop was held on October 14th and 15th at Tamarind Beach Hotel and Rafles Beach Resort in Canouan, SVG.



The workshop sponsored by the Sustainable Grenadines Project, a trans-boundary initiative which began in 2002, attracted approximately thirty participants from the Grenadines islands, Carriacou to Bequia.

The aim of the workshop was to make Grenadine hoteliers aware of the variety of practices that can be undertaken to reduce the footprint of the accommodation sector, including ways to save money and make hotels more attractive. It also



aimed to create a sense of self-determination among participants where they would come away feeling that this is something that is achievable through a combination of their own efforts and with funding from various external sources.

Owners and managers of hotels, guest houses and tourism organizations discussed ways to reduce impact on the environment and at the same time save money. They also examined the current trends in tourism

sector, created a shared-vision, developed ideas for funding and identified priorities for action, which included assisting and resisting factors for success.



Resource persons at the workshop were: Mrs. Loreto Duffy-Mayers, Director of Environmental Programmes, Almond Resorts Inc., Almond Casuarina Beach, Barbados, and Vice Chair, Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism, CTA, Puerto Rico; Ms. Alexandra Paolino, Marketing Officer of Tourism Development, National Investment Promotions Inc., St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ms. Camille Soleyn, Executive Officer, Product Development Unit, Ministry of Tourism, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Mrs. Kirl Hoschtialek from the Grenada Board of Tourism and Dr. Robin Mahon, Director, Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), UWI, Barbados.

By the end of the workshop, participants reached a consensus on what they would like to see in place by the years 2012 – 2017, which included:

- * Enforced Environmentally Sound Legislation
- * Effective Waste Management

Highlights of 2007–2008 Tourism Season in the Southern Grenadines



Tourism Awareness Week for the Southern Grenadines was recognised November 22-24, 2007 under the theme "Building a Culture of Service & Excellence for St. Vincent and the Grenadines". This annual activity marked the official opening of the tourist season and was joint venture between the Union Board of Tourism and the Tobago Cays Marine Park (T.C.M.P).

The week was marked by many cultural activities, displays of local dishes, tourism

products, school visits and a mini-conference discussion.

Speeches were made by Ms. Vidar Bernard, Director of the Tourism Board; Mr. Vibert Dublin, Manager, T.C.M.P; Mr. Edwin Snaggs, Director of Southern Grenadines Affairs; Mr. Terrance Ollivierre, Parliamentary representative of Southern Grenadines; and Mr. Augustine Douglas, Chairman of Union Island Tourist Board.



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Grenadines Plant Identification Training

Prof. Sean Carrington from University of the West Indies (UWI), and Mr. Kareem Sabir, under a UNESCO funded Eastern Caribbean (EC) Flora Project visited several Grenadine Islands over the period July 28 to August 2, 2007 to observe and identify the flora and fauna found in these islands.

The EC Flora Project seeks to collate information on Eastern Caribbean plant biodiversity for use in education, research and conservation.

The project has four objectives:-

- * To expand the dried plant collection and equipment of the Barbados herbarium (BAR) of the UWI , Cave Hill Campus.
- * To develop a collection of photographic images of living plants of the flora of the Eastern Caribbean
- * To prepare and mount a non-specialist, web-based database of the flora of the Eastern Caribbean with images of these plants
- * To provide training in identification of native Eastern Caribbean plants

During the research, a total of 99 plant specimens were collected in triplicate in habitats on Bequia, Petit Nevis, Mayreau and Union Island.

Grenadine Hoteliers ... Cont'd

- * Alternative Energy Solutions
- * Well-managed and Protected Natural Areas
- * Environmental Responsible People (Residents and Visitors)
- * Appreciation of and preservation of our cultural uniqueness
- * Promotion of Local Culinary Experiences
- * Safe Easy Reliable Affordable Transportation

The group identified a number of actions that they can handle or partially handle with funding. These included informing people about the history and culture of the Grenadines, providing employee information about their roles, proper identification for different personnel areas and encouraging tourism as a career choice.

Considering possible project ideas the group settled on five key project areas:

- * Waste, Chemical, Water and Energy Management;
- * Environmental Awareness/Training;

- * Implementation at various levels of Energy Management System Certification (process and planning) – walk through of property (auditing amount of water, energy, etc, training);
- * Networking and Communications;
- * Culture and Heritage.

The Sustainable Grenadines Project aim is to assist in the development and seek funding for these project ideas.

Participants were able to take back to the various establishments greater awareness of the importance of the environment in their businesses and the need to continually take care of it. This will help them to be cost efficient and to protect the natural beauty for themselves and visitors. An internet discussion group was formed to continue to network and share information among participants.



Fort Murray receives EU Grant



The EU Tourism Development Project of St. Vincent and the Grenadines received EC\$350,000.00 EU grant to restore Fort Murray, one of the Tourism Development Projects for the Grenadines and to develop the capacity of the Union Island Museum and Ecological Society (UIMES) to manage the site.

UIMES held an orientation workshop in Union Island on November 24th, to develop an implementation plan for the project. One major outcome of the workshop was the need for UIMES to strengthen its capacity to prove that it has the resources and “know how” to manage the site.

UIMES is expected to enter into a co-management agreement with National Parks Authority, the body responsible for all Park in SVG, for the right to control Fort Murray.

SusGren has pledged assistance in the development of the capacity of UIMES by conducting an ISA, training in co-management and an attachment and exchange with the Museum and Historical Society of Carriacou.

Grenadines Plant Identification Training



One set of specimens was deposited with Rev. Mark de Silva of the Mayreau Environmental Development Organization (MEDO) to form the nucleus of a Grenadines herbarium at the Natural History Centre in Mayreau.

This collection exercise was organized simultaneously with a “Native Plant Identification Workshop”, held July 31 - August 1, 2007, which was funded by the EC Flora project and organized by SusGren on Union Island.

Fifteen persons from several Grenadine Islands, ranging from Forestry and Nursery Officers, nature trail guides, 4Hers and teachers participated in the exercise.

During the field visit, plants were photographed and collected for the UWI herbarium and a list with common names used in the Grenadines were generated from the participants for incorporation into the database.

SusGren Bids Farewell to its Longest Serving Staff Member

SusGren Programme Officer, Ms Alexcia Cooke resigned at the end of October. In a surprise farewell function, friends, colleagues, associates and co-workers said thank you and best wishes to Ms. Cooke whose work in the Grenadines spans over two and a half years.



Her MSc. Thesis on “*a livelihood analysis of the water taxi operators in the Grenadines*” showed her interest in sustainable development which propelled her eventual employment with SusGren.

Well-wishers said that Ms. Cooke contributed more to the development of the Grenadines than she would ever imagine and that she was the engine of SusGren. An emotionally moved Ms. Cooke said that helping people is what really motivates her and that it was time for her to move on.



SusGren adds new staff position



SusGren through SVG Youth Empowerment Service (YES) has added a new staff position of Liaison Officer to the Project Implementing Unit in Union Island. Ms. Raquel Paul of Union Island joined SusGren in September 2007 and is expected to improve the communication and awareness aspects of the project, strengthen the project administration of the PIU and to help facilitate activities at the office. Ms. Paul's experience in accounting and youth facilitation will be an asset to SusGren.

The Sustainable Grenadines Projects 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 Caribbean Conservation Association, Barbados
- *The Governments of Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- * Numerous Grenadines NGOs

It is funded by **The Lighthouse Foundation**, Germany. The Project office is located in Clifton, Union Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Tel: (784)-485-8779 E-Mail: susgren@vincysurf.com

