

# Strengthening environmental stewardship among major stakeholders in the Grenadine Islands

## The Grenadines Water Taxi Project

### REPORT ON CARING FOR OUR COASTS AND OUR FUTURE WORKSHOPS



CEC



SGP



Carriacou Environmental Committee  
Hillsborough, Carriacou, Grenada

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# Strengthening environmental stewardship among major stakeholders in the Grenadine Islands

## REPORT ON CARING FOR OUR COASTS AND OUR FUTURE WORKSHOPS

A project implemented by:

The Carriacou Environmental Committee (CEC), Hillsborough, Carriacou, Grenada

On behalf of:

The Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association

The Carriacou and Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association

Assisted by:

Counterpart Caribbean, The Future Centre, Edgehill, St. Thomas, Barbados

Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

The Sustainable Grenadines Project (SGP), Clifton, Union Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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Participants in the Union island Workshop

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## **Caring for our coasts and our future workshops**

Counterpart Caribbean and 84 representatives of the water taxi operators and wider community in the Grenadines participated in three, two-day workshops called, "Caring for Our Coasts and Our Future". They were held on Carriacou, Union Island, and Bequia during July and September 2005<sup>1</sup>

Each workshop encouraged participants to learn and interact with each other, while they designed an accreditation scheme that motivates water taxi operators to distinguish themselves by good practices in the market place<sup>2</sup>. This special Caribbean Accreditation Scheme, as well as enhanced communications among water taxi operators in the Grenadines, will help businesses and the coastal environment to thrive<sup>3</sup>.

The focus of each workshop was on ethical practices and laws governing the coastal areas of the Grenadines – especially the coral reefs -- their restoration in the event of drastic damage created by bad storms and hurricanes, and user-friendly reporting procedures of other adverse conditions and activities. Participants at the workshops identified major reef species and their ecology, and discussed the effects of human interactions on these delicate ecosystems.

Participants also devoted time to reflection and to planning future activities in order to enhance their livelihoods while caring for their environment.

Certificates of Participation were presented at the end of the second day of each workshop. These certificates represent a crucial first step towards accreditation of participants and the establishment of standards of practice in the coastal zone.

Funding for the workshops was provided by the European Commission as part of the Caribbean Coastal Co-management and Coral Regeneration Programme (4Cs Programme) of Counterpart Caribbean; managed by the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSPI).

## **Carriacou**

The workshop was held in Hillsborough from July 11th to 12th, 2005. This attracted participants from all over Carriacou. Originally another workshop was planned especially to accommodate participants from Petite Martinique, but this workshop was not held because Hurricane Emily affected the Grenadines from Tuesday night (July 12th, 2005) onwards.

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<sup>1</sup> Funding for the workshops was provided by the European Commission as part of the Caribbean Coastal Co-management and Coral Regeneration Programme (4Cs Programme) of Counterpart Caribbean; managed on a global level by the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP).

<sup>2</sup> Planning and coordinating the logistics of the workshops highlighted the collaboration among all the local principals involved -- especially the Sustainable Grenadines Project (SGP) and the Carriacou Environmental Committee/Carriacou and Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association (CEC/CPMwTA), the Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association (SGwTA) and Bequia Independent Water Taxi operators

<sup>3</sup> These workshops were conducted with reference to commitments made by Counterpart Caribbean to contribute to the GEF/UNDP Small Grants Project being managed by the Carriacou Environmental Committee, and considering the ongoing activities being undertaken by the Sustainable Grenadines Project of CERMES, and the Sandy Island/Oyster Bay Project of CREP.

23 persons participated in the Carriacou workshop: approximately half (12) of these were water taxi operators; a quarter (5) were students and youth group representatives; 3 were representatives of the Carriacou Environmental Committee; and, the two other participants were the Program Managers of the Sandy Island/Oyster Bay Project of CREP, and the 4C's Program of Counterpart Caribbean.

The basic program of the 2-day workshop (attached) was customised to suit the conditions and participant mix in Carriacou (as it was for the other islands). The President of the Carriacou and Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association and the President of the Carriacou Environmental Committee welcomed participants, gave some background and set the tone for the workshop.

Aspects of the Carriacou workshop which distinguished it from the other two workshops in this "Caring for Our Coasts and Our Future" series were:

1. The ratio of water taxi operators to other participants – about half-and-half. This was different to the other two workshops in which the overwhelming majority were water taxi operators. Participation however, reflected the mix of people invited to include youth and community groups and the initial expectation that more water taxi operators would have participated in the second scheduled workshop that did not occur because of the hurricane.
2. On-site co-ordination and logistics were performed by the President of the Carriacou Environmental Committee, Mrs. Virginia Fleary-Noel, in collaboration with the President of the Carriacou and Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association, Mr. Kim Bethel.
3. The emphasis of participants especially on education and safety (rather than livelihoods, as in the other two workshops) which probably reflected the participant mix.
4. The addition to the basic program of a tree-planting activity during the field exercise which was initiated and organised by the water taxi operators with advice and support from the CREP Program Manager.
5. The spontaneous clean-up of garbage on Sandy Island, which was organised and undertaken by the water taxi operators during the field exercise
6. The imaginative presentations of "Our Story" which included interpretations of nature and culture in Carriacou by the participants – including a demonstration of life-saving; a short drama about a tourist's visit to the island and water taxi trip; a reading and acrostic poem about the history and nature of Carriacou; and a dialogue between a visitor just arrived from Grenada and a water taxi operator from Carriacou
7. The names of the five teams formed during the workshop – Rhythm Splash, Nature's Way, Stick, Entyce, and Fear Heaven.
8. A celebration at the conclusion of the workshop which included small prizes, food and drinks with contributions from the CEC and President, and a special stick-dancing performance by one of the water taxi operators.

## **Union Island**

The workshop was held in Clifton from September 12th to 13th, 2005. This attracted participants from Union Island and Mayreau, who were joined by the President of the Carriacou Environmental Committee and the President of the Carriacou and Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association.

42 persons participated in the Union Island workshop: most (36) of these, ?? were water taxi operators; 4 were Rangers for the Tobago Cays Marine Park (including the Head Ranger)<sup>4</sup>; 2 were Peace Corps Volunteers; 1 was the Secretary of the Union Island Tourist Bureau, and the 3 other participants were the President of the Carriacou Environmental Committee, the Manager of the Sustainable Grenadines Project of CERMES, and the Manager of the 4C's Program of Counterpart Caribbean.

The basic program of the 2-day workshop was customised to suit the conditions and participant mix (as it was for the other islands). The President of the Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association and the Manager of the Sustainable Grenadines Project welcomed participants, gave some background and set the tone for the workshop.

Aspects of the Union Island workshop which distinguished it from the other two workshops in this "Caring for Our Coasts and Our Future" series were:

1. The large number of participants, over 85% of whom were water taxi operators. This is especially noteworthy because many of the operators are very individualistic and prefer not to meet in groups to "go back to school" as they say.
2. On-site co-ordination and logistics were performed by the Manager of the Sustainable Grenadines Project, Mr. Casper Smith, in collaboration with the President of the Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association, Mr. Montgomery "Monty" Labord.
3. The emphasis of participants especially on collective security and making a living.
4. The very informed and enlightening presentations and discussions by participants on the subjects of "ecosystems and interconnections with people (their words, not mine)"; communications and groups working together; Reef Check and the Tobago Cays; rescue and rehabilitation of reefs; boat operators and visitors; and water taxis in the Grenadines and St. Lucia.
5. The inside venue which was a bar and dance hall with "natural air conditioning" well-modified to accommodate the workshop; and the field site which was accessible by road. Participants were easily able to experience the reef during the field activity and also the interconnections between seagrass beds, reef rubble, living reef and mangroves.
6. The presentations of "Our Story" which included interpretations of nature and culture in the Grenadines by the participants – all of which were prepared as short written essays and read or explained by participants
7. The names of the four teams formed during the workshop – Collective Security, Progressive, Serve and Protect, and Blessings.
8. The much-appreciated presentation of certificates on Richmond Beach which was the site of the field exercise.

## Bequia

The workshop was held at the Bequia Rotary Club's Resource Centre on the coast of Admiralty Bay, from September 15th to 16th, 2005. This attracted participants from Bequia, who were welcomed by the Parliamentary representative for the Northern Grenadines, SVG.

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<sup>4</sup> The three Rangers for the Tobago Cays Marine Park are also water taxi operators

Twenty persons participated in the Union Island workshop: most (15) of these were water taxi operators; 1 was a Director of the Bequia Tourism Association; 1 was a Customs official; 1 a Dive Instructor and 1 a “schooner crew”; and, the other participant was the Manager of the 4C’s Program of Counterpart Caribbean.

The basic program of the 2-day workshop was customised to suit the conditions and participant mix (as it was for the other islands). The Parliamentary Representative for the Northern Grenadines of SVG, and the Manager of the 4C’s Program gave some background and set the tone for the workshop.

Aspects of the Bequia workshop which distinguished it from the other two workshops in this “Caring for Our Coasts and Our Future” series were:

1. The parliamentary representative, Mr. Godwin Friday, opened the workshop with a keynote address that emphasised that the water taxi operators “have a valuable service to provide” and “they must take the bull by the horns, recognise the common interest, and organise!”
2. On-site co-ordination and logistics were performed by independent owner/operator of water taxis and moorings, Mr. Winston “African” Simmons.
3. The relatively large number of water taxi operators (75% of participants) and the fact that they were said to include “all-but-one” of the water taxi operators in Bequia. This is especially noteworthy because the operators have not yet formed a formal organisation/ association.
4. The emphasis of participants especially on making a living and access to funding as a group..
5. The very animated presentations and discussions by participants on the subjects of people’s interactions with sea life and proposed protected areas like the field site (Devil’s Table); mooring buoys installation, maintenance and standards; communications and groups working together; Zonation of Admiralty Bay; boat care, briefing and managing visitors; Sandwatch and Reef Check; rescue and rehabilitation of reefs; and formation of a Recreational Marine Association to which the participants were invited. .
6. An important collective decision was made during the workshop to officially form the “Bequia Water Taxi Association”. This organisation will be registered as a non-government organisation and will officially represent the water taxi operators of Bequia.
7. The names of the two teams formed during the workshop –The Africans, and Water Front
8. The field exercise which was undertaken as a kind of simulated water taxi trip to snorkel at Devil’s Table.



## Field trip



Field Trip to Devil's Table, Bequia (left)

Planting trees on Sandy Island, Carriacou and Petite Martinique Workshop (right)



Participants from the Union Island Workshop with certificates at Richmond Beach (above)

# Appendix 1. PROGRAMME

## CARING FOR OUR COASTS AND OUR FUTURE 2-DAY WORKSHOP IN THE GRENADINES

### DAY ONE - DEVELOPING A LEARNING AND ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

- 9:00-9:15      **Welcome and Introductions**  
*Virginia Fleary-Noel (Carriacou Environmental Committee)*
- 9:15-9:30**      **Expectations -- What's in it for You**  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean)*
- 9:30-10:00      Introduction to the Carriacou and Petit Martinique Water Taxi Association, 4C's Program, and the WiSe Scheme  
*Kim Bethel (CPMWTA) and Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean)*
- 10:00-10:15**      **BREAK**
- 10:15-11:00      The Coral Reef Ecosystem in the Grenadines  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean)*
- Overview of Reef Types and Coral Biology
  - Unhealthy Coral: Bleaching and Disease
- 11:00-12:00**      **Human Interactions with Coastal Systems**  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean)*
- People and Turtles
  - Reporting Damaged Corals
  - Identification of Damaged Corals That Can be Restored
  - Coral Handling and Securing (in situ)
  - Good Ethical Practices
- 12:00-1:00**      **LUNCH**
- 1:00-2:00      Developing Good Practices – Where do we go from here?  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean), other team members and participants*
- Interaction with Corals, Fish, Turtles and other sea life
  - Mooring Buoys Installation and Maintenance
  - A proposed Coral Response Team
  - The CEC and Communications
  - Reef Monitoring (Reef Check)
  - Briefing and Managing Your Visitors
  - Proper Boat Care
  - Accreditation

**2:00-4:00**    **Designing the Learning and Accreditation Scheme**  
*Virginia Fleary-Noel (CEC), Kim Bethel (CPMWTA), Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean), other team members and participants – creative session*

## **DAY 2 - INTERPRETATION AND IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS**

9:00-9:15    **Welcome and Introductions**  
*Virginia Fleary-Noel (Carriacou Environmental Committee)*

9:15-9:30    **Expectations -- What's in it for You**  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean) and Participants*

9:30-10:00    **Telling Our Story**  
*Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean)*

- Interpretation of Nature and Culture
- Concepts
- Techniques
- Content

10:00-12:00    **Field Visit to a small island reef**  
*All participants to Sandy Island*

**12:00-1:00**    **LUNCH**

1:00-2:30    **Developing Our Story – Where do we go from here?**  
*Virginia Fleary-Noel (CEC), Kim Bethel (CPMWTA), Susan Mahon (Counterpart Caribbean), other team members and participants*

- Peoples' Interactions with sea life
- Landmarks/Attractions of Special Significance
- Communications
- Briefing and Managing Your Visitors
- Proper Boat Care
- Monitoring and Rescue

**2:30-3:00**    **Review of the Workshop, Reflection and Evaluation by Participants**

**3:00-4:00**    **Presentation of Certificates and Workshop Materials to Participants, and Celebration**  
*All participants*