

# **Strengthening environmental stewardship among major stakeholders in the Grenadine Islands**

## **The Grenadines Water Taxi Project**

### **INCEPTION REPORT**



**CEC**



**COUNTERPART CARIBBEAN**  
at the Future Centre

**SGP**



**Carriacou Environmental Committee  
Hillsborough, Carriacou, Grenada**

**April 2005**



# **Strengthening environmental stewardship among major stakeholders in the Grenadine Islands**

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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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Cover photo:

A water taxi on its way from Carriacou to Union Island

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## Background

Marine-based activities are the mainstay of the economy of the Grenadines islands. Users of the marine environment in the area, both locals and visitors have significant impacts on marine habitats and biodiversity due to inappropriate practices (such as over-harvesting of fishery resources, coral harvesting, marine pollution, and physical damage by boats and anchors) and lack of awareness. These impacts have substantial long-term implications for sustainability in the Grenadines.

The Carriacou Environmental Committee CEC is implementing projects and programmes to reduce the above impacts. More specifically the CEC has recognised that water taxis are among the most important users of the marine environment, as they operate widely throughout the Grenadines and interface with many other users. Water taxis are an important and integral component of sustainable livelihoods and social life in the Grenadines.. They provide transport between islands to visitors and locals. They also offer visitors day trips for sightseeing, snorkelling and picnicking; often into the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TC-MP) and other areas that are proposed as MPAs.

The extensive operation of water taxis throughout the Grenadine Islands means that they have the potential to significantly impact the marine environment in two ways. The first is directly through their own practices. The second is as teachers and advocates of good environmental practices. Water taxis impact the marine environment directly through poor operating or waste disposal practices leading to pollution, or physical impacts through grounding and anchoring. Although these impacts have not been quantitatively assessed, they can be commonly observed, and it is generally accepted that they are occurring. As indicated above, water taxis are also in frequent contact with local travellers and visitors whom they take out for trips, and visiting yachters whose needs they service in various ways. In this mode they have the potential to inform, as well as provide surveillance of harmful environmental practices by all their clients and even others whom they may see during the course of their daily activities.

These problems and opportunities for stewardship are also recognized by water taxi operators in Bequia, Union Island, Canouan, Mayreau, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Two groups of operators have formed associations to seek help in addressing these problems through training and capacity building (CERMES 2004). With appropriate assistance, they see themselves contributing to the conservation of the marine environment through their frequent contact with locals and visitors in a setting conducive to environmental education.

From a livelihoods perspective, most water taxi operators are small-scale operators who are struggling to make a living. They operate small, open, outboard powered boats. They are currently largely unregulated. The boats are often poorly equipped. The operators are seldom trained in the skills that are required to operate a passenger craft or a small business and much lack the necessary capacity to provide safe and efficient service. For this reason, they are often marginalized in favour of a few well-equipped water taxi operators that are recognized by the tourism authorities as being capable of providing safe, reliable service. The informal water taxi operators are in danger of being further marginalized by emerging international frameworks for safety and security at sea, as well as by large-scale tourism development by international investors.

This project has its origins in Phase 1 of the Sustainable Grenadines Project. Water Taxi Strengthening was identified as a priority during participatory strategic planning in Phase 1 of

that project (see the CERMES website for a description of the project and a downloadable version of the participatory strategic plan - <http://cermes.cavehill.uwi.edu>). The planning was followed up specifically for water taxi operators in June 2004 with funding from the European Union provided to Counterpart Caribbean for its Caribbean Coral Garden and Coastal Co-management (4Cs) Program<sup>1</sup>. This led to the submission of a proposal to the Global Environmental Facility, Small Grants Programme for funding to implement activities identified in a planning exercise funded by Counterpart Caribbean. This funding was approved in April 2005. The present report is the Planning Report for the 4C's Programme as well as the Inception Report for the project supported by the GEF funding.

## Planning/Inception meeting

Members of the Executives of the Carriacou Environmental Committee, the two water taxi associations, the Sustainable Grenadines Project, Counterpart Caribbean, and CERMES met in Carriacou on Tuesday April 12th, 2005 to confirm their roles in the project and to prepare an initial plan and schedule for implementation. Participants introduced themselves and gave a brief account of their relationship to the project. The participants are listed below.

NAME	TITLE	ORGANISATION
Virginia Fleary Noel	President	Carriacou Environmental Committee
Kathleen Alexander	Volunteer	Carriacou Environmental Committee
Barbarann St. Hillaire	Volunteer	Carriacou Environmental Committee
Casper Smith	Project Manager Secretary	Sustainable Grenadines Project
Kim Bethell	President	Carriacou and Petit Martinique Water Taxi Association
Thomas Alexander	Project Officer	Carriacou and Petit Martinique Water Taxi Association
Emmery Matheson	Member	Carriacou and Petit Martinique Water Taxi Association
Monty Labord	President	Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association
Robin Mahon	Director	CERMES, UWI
Maria Pena	Project Officer	CERMES, UWI
Susan Mahon	Manager	Counterpart Caribbean

Ms. Virginia Fleary-Noel, President of CEC welcomed participants and expressed her pleasure at having everyone meeting in Carriacou for this long-awaited project. She then invited Dr. Robin Mahon, CERMES to lead the planning process.

The proposal that was approved by the GEF was used as the basis for planning. The approach was to first take the four objectives in turn and for each activity associated with an objective, to list the steps that would be required to implement it. The organisation(s) responsible for each step were also listed. During this process certain overarching activities were also identified and recorded. This information is presented below in tables. During the discussions about how to implement activities a wealth of ideas and information was provided by participation. This is recorded as endnotes which are numbered with superscripts. This approach is used to allow the implementation process to appear clearly without losing the valuable information provided by participants.

## Grenadines Water Taxi Project: Specific Objective 1: Environmental Education<sup>1</sup>

1.1 Green boat operation training <sup>ii</sup>		1.2 Natural resources management training <sup>iii iv</sup> , 1.3 Environmental stewardship training <sup>v</sup>		1.4 Production and distribution of environmental education material	
Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility
Identify lead consultant (LC)	CEC, CERMES	Identify lead consultant	CEC, CERMES	Research existing materials <sup>vi</sup>	LC, CEC, CC, CERMES
Identify SVG team members	SG <sup>2</sup>	Identify SVG team members	SG	Adapt selected ones to the Grenadines	LC, CEC, CC, CERMES
Identify GRN team members	CEC, CERMES	Identify GRN team members	CEC, CERMES	Identify target audiences	LC, CEC, CC, CERMES
Review GB practices for other areas (gather information)	LC	Explore links with customer service activities	CEC, CERMES, CC	Produce and distribute materials <sup>vii</sup>	LC, CEC, CC, CERMES
Assessment of current situation <sup>viii</sup>	LC	Identify participants (6 x 15)	CEC, WTAs, SG	<b>1.5 Production of a report and action plan for phasing out environmentally unfriendly engines</b>	
Identify participants (3 x 30)	CEC, WTAs, SG	Set locations and places	CEC, WTAs, SG	Implementation steps	Responsibility
Set locations and places	CEC, WTAs, SG	Prepare course outline	LC	Review current information on environmentally friendly engines	Green Boat lead consultant
Prepare course outline <sup>ix</sup>	LC	Explore other contributors <sup>x</sup>	CEC, WTAs, SG, CERMES, CC	Analyse current Grenadines situation	Green Boat lead consultant
Explore other contributors <sup>xi</sup>	CEC, WTAs, SG, CERMES, CC	Finalise course	LC	Explore compliance with ISPS codes	Green Boat lead consultant, WTAs
Finalise course	LC	Deliver 6 courses <sup>xii</sup>	LC	Prepare report	Green Boat lead consultant, CEC, CERMES
Deliver 3 courses <sup>xiii</sup>	LC				

<sup>1</sup> Counterpart Caribbean will be associated with the Environmental Education training. The duration of the projects relating to GEF and CC have different time frames. CC funded activities end in February 2006, therefore the environmental education component of this project needs to be completed by November 2005 to allow time for reporting and accountability. Green boat training, natural resources management training and environmental stewardship training will consequently be conducted within the first 7 months of the project..

<sup>2</sup> Sustainable Grenadines Project

**Grenadines Water Taxi Project - Specific Objective 2: Customer service training**

<b>2.1 Customer service and attitude/self marketing/negotiation training</b> <b>2.2 Self-marketing skills training</b> <b>2.3 Training in negotiation skills<sup>xiv</sup></b>		<b>Overall</b>	
<b>Implementation steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Implementation steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Identify lead consultant <sup>xv</sup>	CEC	Explore certification procedure with Port Authority Fisheries, Tourism <sup>xvi</sup>	CEC, SG, WTAs
Identify SVG team members	LC, SG, SGWTA	Explore support for WTAs for business cards, flyers, badges, id cards, shirts	WTAs
Identify GRN team members	LC, CEC, CPMWTA		
Identify participants (6 x 15)	LC, CEC, SG, WTAs		
Set locations and places	LC, CEC, SG, WTAs		
Prepare course outline	LC		
Explore other contributors, e.g tourism	LC, CEC, SG, WTAs		
Finalise course	LC		
Deliver 6 courses <sup>xviiixviii</sup>	LC		

Grenadines Water Taxi Project: Specific Objective 3: Safety at Sea

3.1 Acquisition of safety demonstration equipment		3.1 Safety equipment demonstration and 3.2 safety procedures training		Overall	
Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility
Identify lead consultant <sup>xxix</sup>	CEC	Identify participants (6 x 15) <sup>xx</sup>	LC, CEC, SG, WTAs	Explore certification procedure with Port Authority, Fisheries, Tourism <sup>xxi</sup>	CEC, SG, WTAs
Identify SVG team members <sup>xxii</sup>	LC, SG, SGWTA	Set locations and places	CEC, WTAs, SG	Explore means of acquiring equipment for members <sup>xxiii</sup>	WTAs, CEC, SG
Identify GRN team members <sup>xxiv</sup>	LC, CEC, CPMWTA	Prepare course outline	LC	Explore liability insurance for WT operators	WTAs, CEC, SG
Explore duty free concession	CEC, SG, LC	Explore other contributors, e.g. Red Cross	LC, CEC, SG, WTAs	Explore boat insurance	WTAs, CEC, SG
List of equipment <sup>xxv</sup>	LC	Finalise course	LC	Explore sponsorship	WTAs
Purchase demo equipment	CEC	Deliver 6 courses <sup>xxvii</sup>	LC		

Grenadines Water Taxi Project - Specific Objective 4: Organisational strengthening<sup>3</sup>

4.1 Production of WTAs website <sup>xxviii</sup>		4.2 Training of CEC and WTA leaders		4.3 Individual level record keeping training		4.4 Acquisition of office equipment and supplies <sup>xxix</sup> , <sup>xxx</sup>	
Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility	Implementation steps	Responsibility
Explore local web designers <sup>xxxi</sup>	CEC, SG, WTAs	Course 1: leadership, organisation and meeting skills		Locate institution that delivers training	CEC, SG, CERMES	Identify equipment to be purchased	Each WTA to provide list
Engage web designer	CEC	Identify trainer	CEC, SG, CERMES	Set locations and places <sup>xxxii</sup>	CEC, SG	Purchase equipment	CEC
Preliminary web design for review	LC	Identify participants	CEC, WTAs, SG	Prepare course outline	LC		
Train WTAs in web site maintenance	LC	Identify location	CEC, WTAs, SG	Finalise course	LC		
Implement/launch website	LC	Prepare course outline	LC	Deliver 2 courses <sup>xxxiii</sup>	LC		
		Finalise course	LC				
		Deliver course for 25-30 participants	LC				
		Course 2: Office procedures and accounting	Same as above				
		Course 3: Small business planning and management	Same as above				

<sup>3</sup> SG is interested in the Organisational Strengthening component of the project.

## Grenadines Water Taxi Project - Schedule of workshops and major events

Project Activity	1 Apr	2 May	3 Jun	11 Jul	5 Aug	6 Sep	7 Oct	8 Nov	9 Dec	10 Jan	11 Feb	12 Mar	13 Apr	14 May	15 Jun	16 Jul	17 Aug	18 Sep
1.1 Green boat operation training								W3										
1.2 Natural Resources Management /1.3 Environmental stewardship training				W3	W3													
1.4 Production and distribution of environmental education material		X	X	X	X	X	X											
1.5 Report and action plan for environmentally unfriendly engines										X								
2.1 Customer service and attitude/self marketing/negotiation training												W3	W3					
3.1 Acquisition of safety demonstration equipment				X	X	X												
3.1 Safety equipment demonstration and safety procedures training							W3		W3									
4.1 Production of WTAs website	X																	
4.2 Training of CEC, WTA and NGO leaders			1W						1W		1W							
4.3 Individual level record keeping training																		2W
4.4 Acquisition of office equipment and supplies	X																	
<b>JEC</b>	X						X						X					X
<b>Other activities</b>																		
Baseline survey <sup>4</sup>			X	X	X													
Explore certification procedure																		
Explore WTA support for business cards, flyers, badges, id cards, shirts, etc.																		
Explore means of acquiring equipment for members																		
Explore liability insurance for WT operators																		
Explore boat insurance																		
Fee structure																		
Movement of project persons between countries																		
Movement of water taxis and customers between countries																		

<sup>4</sup> To be conducted by a CERMES Masters student as their research project. The information will be put into a report and on completion of the project will be compared with another survey. This will be a contribution of CERMES to the project.

Finally, the group reviewed the remaining aspects of the approved proposal. Responsibility for some of the remaining tasks is indicated in the table below.

#### Monitoring and Record keeping

Implementation steps	Responsibility
Inception report	CEC, CC, SG
Interim reports	CEC, CC, SG
Upgrade review	CEC, CC, SG
Final report	CEC, CC, SG

The Joint Executive Committee comprising those present at the Planning/Inception Meeting (and a representative from the Tourism sector) will communicate electronically for group discussions to report on the progress of the project or the need for changes within the project. The JEC will also meet every six months throughout the duration of the project.

It was explained that the baseline survey would be carried out by a CERMES student as their research project. A CERMES Research Assistant will also be conducting a baseline survey for the Sustainable Grenadines Project that will provide some baseline information for the Water taxi Project.

Counterpart Caribbean and UNDP require and expects reports at intervals during the project. Dissemination of information via the media is also encouraged and could be done when launching the WTAs website and on commencement of training courses. Making people aware of the project is beneficial to communities.

Noting that the scope of the project is quite broad, and that there is the potential to involve a wider range of stakeholders, the JEC has been advised by the GEF SGP Coordinator that 10 months into the project they should review the project and determine whether there should be application for an upgrade.

## Overarching Issues

There are several overarching issues that require considerable further attention. One of these is the matter of certification for WT operators. Clearly, it is highly desirable that the WT operators be provided with recognition for their participation. Ideally, this should indicate an increased capacity for service and stewardship, that would result in benefits through recognition by customers. This level of certification could be provided by the WTAs for their members and could be an incentive for operators to belong to WTAs.

Schemes for funds to acquire safety equipment and for upgrading boats are also a critical overarching issue. Impacts of training will be minimal if the funds for safety improvement are not available.

The meeting participants concluded that the way ahead for implementation now seemed quite clear, although the planned program is quite ambitious for the time-frame. They expressed their commitment to making the project work.

## End notes

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<sup>i</sup> CERMES. 2004. Report of the vision and project planning workshop for Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association and Carriacou Petite Martinique Water Taxi Association held on June 27-28, 2004, Carriacou, Grenada. Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies, University of the West Indies, 23 pp.

<sup>ii</sup> Emphasis should be placed on how WT operators can outfit their boats for 'green' operation.

<sup>iii</sup> The goal of this activity is to inform WT operators about factors causing pollution and degradation of the marine environment and then have them use this knowledge in their daily boat operation.

<sup>iv</sup> Natural resource management training and environmental stewardship education are to be merged.

<sup>v</sup> The goal of this activity is to aid WT operators in interacting with their customers, educating them on marine environment do's and don'ts, for e.g. do not break the coral and remove for souvenirs.

<sup>vi</sup> Flyers, videos, etc. There is quite a lot of this type of information already available and it could be customised for the Grenadines.

<sup>vii</sup> An output of the training sessions would be educational material, possibly a laminated card of do's and don'ts in the marine environment which could be given to people while onboard WTs. It was also suggested that similar material could be placed in hotels and guest houses.

<sup>viii</sup> An assessment of the way in which the boats are currently operating ranging from leaking engines, garbage disposal, anchoring, to running boats on seagrass shallows. There is a possibility that a CERMES student could carry out this assessment for their research project.

<sup>ix</sup> Experiences of operating environmentally friendly boats in Florida and the Great Barrier Reef could be drawn on for this component.

<sup>x</sup> e.g. Solid Waste Mgmt, Min of Env/Health, Tourism Boards, CREP, CBOs, Oil companies, community organisations

<sup>xi</sup> e.g. Solid Waste Mgmt, Min of Env/Health, Tourism Boards, CREP, Oil companies.

<sup>xii</sup> This training will comprise 6 two-day workshops of 15 people each – one day for natural resource education and the other day for teaching WT operators how to become guides. The latter will be the practical component possibly done as field trips on boats. Small groups were decided on for this training due to the practical component.

<sup>xiii</sup> 3 one-day sessions of 30 people each will be conducted. Larger numbers are possible with this training since it was established that WT operators are already aware of what they can do to improve their operation, it is a matter of encouraging them to put 'green' operations into practice.

<sup>xiv</sup> The three activities comprising this objective will be merged and would be taught as a two-day course.

<sup>xv</sup> Naline Joseph was suggested as a possible lead consultant for the Customer Service Training project, since she has had experience training water taxi operators in Grenada possibly along with a person from Counterpart Caribbean. She was a participant in the Planning Workshop.

<sup>xvi</sup> It was noted that each component of the Customer Service Training objective should be towards certification.

<sup>xvii</sup> 6 two-day courses will be conducted.

<sup>xviii</sup> An expected outcome of Customer Service Training will be a handbook on customer service.

<sup>xix</sup> Consultants must be engaged for this project component. CEC will need assistance to run this overall activity. A team would be appropriate with a lead person as coordinator.

<sup>xx</sup> Safety equipment demonstration and training can be extended to all those interested and should not be limited to only WTA members. Fishers could be involved since the Fisheries Department in Grenada has provided theoretical training to fishers.

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<sup>xxi</sup> All gathered agreed that workshop participants should be certified following training. It was noted that there needs to be a distinction between certification provided by the WTAs and the Port Authority.

<sup>xxii</sup> The SVG Coastguard has previously offered to train WT operators in safety procedures. A team of people comprising the Coastguard, Port Authority and various government departments would be appropriate to conduct this component.

<sup>xxiii</sup> This was a point of major discussion since the question of how WTs will acquire the money they need to outfit their boats with the necessary safety equipment was raised. The suggestion of renting equipment from the WTAs was made, providing that more equipment could be bought by the project. This is not a feasible solution since only two sets of equipment can be purchased by the project. One WT member informed the group that the government of SVG was giving small grant loans and this is an option that could be investigated for purchasing safety equipment. Counterpart Caribbean suggested that the WT operators could join with fishers to lobby the government for duty-free concessions for equipment. This raised the issue of licensing to be eligible for duty-free concessions. One WT member mentioned that since the WTAs are registered bodies they should have ID cards that would enable them to get concessions when purchasing equipment. It was noted that CEC through the Fisheries Division is able to obtain duty-free concessions. Therefore it was determined that CEC with assistance from the Sustainable Grenadines Project should explore the issue of duty-free concessions for WTAs.

<sup>xxiv</sup> A team of people comprising the Coastguard, Port Authority and various government departments would be appropriate to conduct this component.

<sup>xxv</sup> 2 sets of safety equipment will be purchased for the demonstration and training activity with each set of equipment left with the WTAs for continued demonstrations.

<sup>xxvi</sup> There will be 6 two-day workshops for safety demonstration and equipment.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Testing following training was raised. The best approach would be a practical test since it was pointed out that many WT operators may be either illiterate or unable to read properly, but are good boatmen. A written test would alienate those who should be trained. This project activity should provide initial familiarity with safety equipment and procedures. Additional advanced training could be undertaken in the future but is outside of the scope of the current project.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Ideally there should be one Grenadines Water Taxi website with links to the separate WTAs and a link to the project. Information such as WT trip prices, packages, and general information on the Grenadines marine environment could be included on the website.

<sup>xxix</sup> The 2 WTAs will be outfitted with a desk, chair, computer and printer. It is up to each WTA to provide CEC with a list of the necessary office equipment.

<sup>xxx</sup> In Union Island the WTA will be located in the Sustainable Grenadines Project Office and in Carriacou the WTA will be sharing office space with the CEC.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Locally there are 3 web designers that should be contacted for estimates.

<sup>xxxii</sup> The course could be conducted by the SEDUs in the two countries. There are institutions available in St. Vincent and Grenada that can provide this training.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> There will be a one-day course on individual level record keeping.