

In this issue:

- Launch of Dominican Republic's National sub-Project ...pgs. 1,6
- IWeco's 3rd Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting ...pgs. 1,2
- ESAV & Carbon Sequestration training ...pg. 2

www.iweco.org

- IWeco Cuba –Environmental Regulation Workshop ...pg. 3
- CARPHA-EHSD and International Biodiversity Day ...pg. 3
- IWeco Regional Media Strategy Workshop ...pgs.4, 5

www.iweco.org

- GEF-SGP IWeco Project Implementation Review Meeting ...pg.5
- GEF Pacific R2R Programme shares LL with IWeco ...pg. 6
- IWeco and CEP COP15 ...pg. 7

www.iweco.org

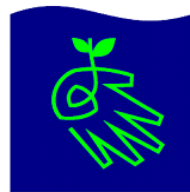
- #CleanSeas –Engaging the Public ...pg. 7
- IOCARIBE-XV and SIDS ...pg. 7
- IWeco Saint Lucia featured at GEF ECW Knowledge Day ...pg. 8

Sustainable Development Goals being addressed



Volume 2, Issue 2

June 2019



IWECO:link

Quarterly newsletter of the GEF-funded Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States Project



Minister Estevez and the RPC shake hands following the Feature Address

IWeco Steering Committee endorses 2019 -20 Work Plan, Budget and request for extension

IWeco held its 3rd Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting (RPSC 3) in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic on 2-3 April 2019.

The opening session was chaired by Ms. Patricia Abreu, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic. Participating Countries, with the exception of Barbados, the Regional Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), and partner agencies were represented in addition to a few specially invited guests.

The Regional Project Coordinator, Jan Betlem, outlined challenges being faced by the Project, notably:

- insufficient synchronization between Small Grant Programme and IWeco project activities in each country
- Inadequate information about what is happening in the countries



IWeco RSPC 3 Participants

(Continued on page 2)

The Dominican Republic's National sub-Project launched!

The Dominican Republic's IWeco National sub-project was launched on 1st April 2019 was well attended by government representatives, a wide range of stakeholders and the media.

Titled: "Integrated Management of the Biodiversity, Freshwater and Land Resources of the Higüamo River Watershed and its Associated Coastal Zone, including Mitigating Climate Change Impacts."

The Launch was organized by the executing agency, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. It was well attended by government representatives, a wide range of stakeholders and the media.

The Regional Project Coordinator provided an overview of the Regional Project, following which Patricia

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 1)

- The need for faster feedback on issues
- The need for more timely submission of financial & progress monitoring reports
- Internal bureaucracy related to procurement for administrative and financial issues
- Slow pace of action in some countries
- Slow pace of communication between some countries/partners/ PCU

His hopes and wishes for the Project, he stressed, included:

- Further expansion and development of activities at intervention sites
- Enhanced community and government capacity building
- Increased media coverage of the project at all levels
- Smooth communication and timely delivery of required information documents
- Optimized resource use (including the capacity of the PCU and collaborating partners) from all levels
- That even the 'late starters' would soon begin activities.

Key Decisions of RPSC 3 included:

- Approval of an extension of the IWECO project until September 2023 allowing all national and regional interventions to be completed, including interventions funded through UNDP.
- Approval of the 2019 Workplan and noted projected budget for future years, to be confirmed at future RPSC Meetings.
- Noted the importance of functioning National Inter-sectoral/Inter-ministerial Committees and agreed to create and/or optimize these committees for each country.
- Noted the progress of GEF IWECO Small Grants projects which will reach completion by the end of 2019 supporting the overall objectives of IWECO at local community level offering opportunities for learning, replication and upscaling.
- Agreed to the IWECO Communication Strategy as presented and to the format of the website as presented, and, to provide ongoing contributions.
- Agreed to the utilisation and format of IWECO progress monitoring via the Monitoring Dashboards.
- Recognised the importance of an environmental monitoring mechanism and the value of environmental monitoring dashboards.
- Noted the request of countries for support in the areas of research and governance; in this regard, regional executing partners agreed to provide clarification on the process to be followed and the specific support possible in collaboration with the PCU.
- Proposed that the next RPSC Meeting (2020) be held in Grenada.

Ecosystem Services Assessment and Valuation (ESAV) and Carbon Sequestration training appreciated by participants



Saint Lucia, May 20-22, 2019

The Caribbean Public Health Agency-Environmental Health and Sustainable Development Department (CARPHA-EHSD), in a strategic collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), hosted a three-day training workshop in Ecosystem Services Assessment and Valuation and Carbon Sequestration from May 20-22, 2019 in Saint Lucia. The workshop helped to meet the recurring request for training in carbon sequestration and ecosystem services valuation from IWECO's participating countries. It also aimed to show ESAV can be integrated into policy, coastal master planning, and marine spatial planning (MSP) development.

Participants were introduced to ecosystem services assessment and valuation and provided information from their respective islands concerning the identification of key ecosystem services that could be used to populate an ocean mapping platform called Mapping Ocean Wealth (MOW) (<http://maps.oceanwealth.org/>), which is currently being developed via The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as part of the Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project (CROP). They were also introduced to carbon sequestration assessments, scenarios and how these concepts could be applied in their respective countries. In addition, funding opportunities that might be available via donors who might be willing to offset their carbon emissions were discussed.

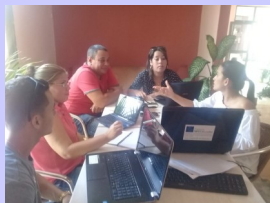
The workshop, which brought together participants from the Caribbean working in various areas, was attended by representatives of all but one of IWECO's ten participating countries. Significantly, Barbados was represented at an IWECO activity for the first time. It illustrated the linkages between IWECO and CROP, involving overlap with other partners such as the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES). Overall, the workshop was a success as demonstrated by the evaluation survey which indicated high levels of satisfaction and increase of knowledge and understanding in the areas covered amongst participants.



#CaringForOurFuture

IWEco Cuba hosts National Methodological Workshop on Environmental Regulation

IWEco's Cuba National sub-Project held a National Methodological Workshop on Environmental Regulation, 26th - 30th May 2019 in Sancti Spiritus.



The meeting was coordinated by the Centre for Environmental Studies of Cienfuegos (CEAC). Its objective was to analyze and establish the methodological guidelines for the preparation of proposals for environmental management in the demonstration areas of the project.



Workshop participants

International Day for Biological Diversity celebrated by CARPHA-EHSD

May 22, 2019 was International Day for Biological Diversity. In Saint Lucia, the OECS Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Development, hosted a Healthy Food Fair and Exhibition at the Provost Park, Morne Fortune for students and members of the public.



Bradshaw Isaacs, CARPHA-EHSD, delivers Opening Remarks

The theme was: "Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health" and sought to increase knowledge and awareness of the dependency of our food systems, nutrition, and health on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems as well as the contributions of our natural systems to human well-being.

The Caribbean Public Health Agency - Environmental Health and Sustainable Development Department (CARPHA-EHSD) hosted an exhibition booth showcasing the initiatives and projects it is involved in, including IWEco.

Bradshaw Isaacs, Technical Officer, made opening remarks on behalf of CARPHA. He noted that the diversity of the Earth's natural assets is made up of many millions of distinct biological species of plants and animals on land, in water, and in the atmosphere which link humans and the environment into one interdependent ecosystem.

He stressed that biological diversity, or "biodiversity" as it is also known, makes the world beautiful and unique, and is important for food, shelter, medicines and other ecosystem services, sustainable livelihoods, agriculture, tourism industries and future untapped resources.

Highlighting the stark reality of the current situation, he pointed out that the world is losing biodiversity at an ever-increasing and alarming rate. Research shows that not only has biodiversity declined by more than a quarter in the last 35 years in terms of number of species, but also, globally, humanity is using 40% more resources than nature can regenerate in a year. To put it another way, we would need 1.4 planet Earths to support our lifestyle. This is crucial because biodiversity is critical for human development.

Preserving biodiversity is key to a future where people have sufficient food supplies, where there is resilience to pests and diseases, where fresh water is in sufficient supply and where climate change is mitigated.

Proving again that through Partnership is how we get things done!

In early-February, the Energy Chamber of Trinidad & Tobago awarded National Quarries Company Limited the **Best Social Investment Project (Large)** on the basis of rehabilitation work and alternative livelihood opportunities created under the IWEco Project. The work of the Quarry Rehabilitation Champions and local partners was featured in this short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRXXkLJlojY&feature=youtu.be>

We congratulate our partners in T&T!



Finding the right mix of traditional and social (or new) media for IWEco

IWEco hosted a workshop to develop a media strategy that would use an effective mix of traditional and new (social) media to increase awareness of, and engagement in, the Project and the issues it is addressing. Among other things, the Workshop provided inputs to a Media Toolkit which is meant to guide participating countries and partners in preparing material for and using traditional and new or social media, given new technologies and the changing media landscape. IWEco wanted the process to be participatory and, by the end of the Workshop to have agreement on the outreach channels as well as the elements for inclusion in the Toolkit.

From 14 – 15 May 2019, representatives of IWEco’s Communications Partnership (CANARI, PCI Media, Caribbean SEA and PANOS), persons responsible for communications in the National sub-Projects in Cuba and Trinidad & Tobago, the Communications Officer at CARPHA which is responsible for Components 2 and 3, at CEP where the PCU is hosted, and a local journalist, joined the Regional Project Coordinator and Communications Specialist at a Regional Media Strategy Workshop at the Asa Wright Nature Centre in Arima, Trinidad and Tobago.

A field trip to a nearby site of the Trinidad and Tobago National sub-Project, National Quarries Company Limited, Guaico, North East Trinidad was embarked upon to illustrate the issues surrounding quarrying and rehabilitation of affected land, water and ecosystems. Participants were encouraged to generate story ideas and to record visual material for various traditional and social media with guidance from expert participants.

The IWEco Trinidad National sub-Project aims to rehabilitate degraded quarry lands. The site visit planned for the afternoon of 14th May was introduced by Anna-Lisa Benjamin, the Trinidad & Tobago National sub-Project representative, who provided background and described the rehabilitation interventions at three pilot sites which had begun in January 2018.

NQCL’s Environmental Officer, Kareem Ali, was the guide to all three sites within the compound. These sites represent a total of 2.7 hectares that have so far been rehabilitated but with different levels and types of intervention. Site 3, the site with least intervention (species enrichment and fire trace construction) was visited first, followed by Site

(Continued on page 5)



Bennet Charles of PCI Media Inc. focused on social media



Ana-Lisa Arlen-Benjamin of the EMA, introduced the site to be visited and provided background on the T&T project



Barbara Jacobs-Small led the discussion on the Toolkit



Introduction to the site with most interventions



Carlton Roberts of SusTrust demonstrated how live check dams work to reduce soil erosion



Sitting under the carat shed constructed by the Quarry Rehabilitation Champions was cool indeed; plant nursery in background



Marva, one of the Champions who explained how participating in the project has changed her perspective.



A variety of products made from vetiver grass by the Champions who received training through IAMovement, one of the two NGOs working closely with the project.



Champions expressed their appreciation for what they have learned using poetry, verse, even the spoken word!

(Continued from page 4)

1 where there have been more Agro-Forestry interventions including fruit trees and irrigation and some soil enrichment. Site 2 was visited last as this is the site where five types of interventions are taking place – soil nitrification/soil enrichment using spent waste material from the local brewery, species enrichment, soil stabilization using vetiver, and erosion control using live-check dams.

At Site 2, “Quarry Rehabilitation Champions”, women and men from nearby communities who have been trained in techniques related to the above at all three sites and who are working for a stipend paid by the Project, made presentations or spoke about their work on the sites and how it has made a difference in their lives. Some of them, in addition to being trained in soil rehabilitation and tree planting, were trained in the use of vetiver grass to make a variety of products (thus introducing an important livelihood aspect). They gave very eloquent testimonials of their experiences and learning. These were recorded on video by participants for future use in communications.

The field visit provided ample material for workshop participants to develop stories, in addition to excellent illustrations of cause and effect and of the linkages between different parts of the environment. These were later discussed in the context of which might be most suitable for traditional media coverage vrs. new or social media coverage. Participants also discussed newsworthy aspects and how to frame their stories for the various media.



#CaringForOurFuture #NosImportaElFuturo #iweco



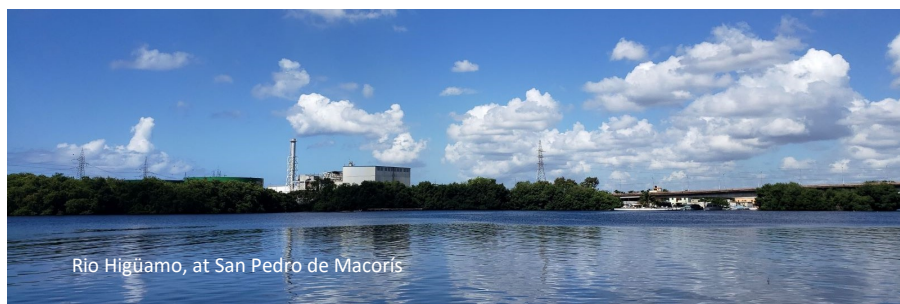
GEF SGP IWEco-funded Projects Review Progress

On 8th June 2019, the Regional Project Coordinator participated in the UNDP-organized SGP Regional Coordinators Workshop to review the implementation of projects in eight IWEco countries which promote livelihoods while supporting project objectives. He presented the status of execution of the IWEco Regional Project and National SGP Coordinators then described the status of SGP implementation in their respective countries as well as lessons learned. Notable among challenges were the delay in implementation of the National sub-projects; the great expectations encountered at local level despite the limited allocation of project grants; and the low level of stakeholder capacity.

Despite the late start of implementation of the IWEco National sub-Projects, it was concluded that there is a growing synergy and complementarity between SGP interventions and IWEco National sub-Projects, especially as new SGP projects in these countries will continue to be developed following the Ridge-to-Reef approach.



Clockwise, Sharda Mahabir of T&T, Alberto Sanchez of the DR, Sulan Chen of UNDP, and Giles Romulus of Saint Lucia.



Rio Higüamo, at San Pedro de Macorís

(Continued from page 1)

Abreu, Global Environment Facility (GEF) Focal Point for the Dominican Republic, and Vice-Minister in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, made a presentation on the National sub-Project. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Angel Estevez, made the feature address which was well received.



The Dominican Republic's IWeco National sub-Project focuses on the Higüamo River watershed and associated coastal zone. It aims to conserve, protect and guarantee the sustainable use of the water, land and biodiversity resources of the Higüamo River watershed and its estuarine zone to ensure the region's future economic development, for the benefit of current and future generations, and to protect and rehabilitate selected ecosystems of the watershed and its associated coastal zone from further damaging anthropogenic activities and the effects of global warming.



The lack of appropriate policy, legal and institutional frameworks undermine the implementation of an integrated management plan for the watershed and its associated coastal area. Serious water and land pollution problems are the greatest threat to the sustainability of the biodiversity of this important region. A comprehensive, cross-sectoral approach is needed that effectively engages stakeholders by producing concrete benefits leading to improved livelihoods, including improved provision of ecosystem services, greater economic opportunities and a healthier environment in which to live.



In addition to its primary focus on the conservation and sustainable use of the watershed's biodiversity, the Government of the Dominican Republic has indicated that 27,574.12 hectares, or 275.4 km², of existing forest cover in the Higüamo River watershed will be protected and sustainably managed through the project. Moreover, the project will support the reforestation of 500 hectares, largely mangroves that are the habitat for a great deal of biodiversity, including endemic species. These actions will provide significant contributions to mitigating the impacts of climate change by maintaining 965,097 tons of retained carbon in existing forests and sequestering another 1,750 through reforestation, for a total of 966,847 tons of retained carbon.

On 4 April 2019, IWeco RPSC 3 participants visited selected sites in the Watershed including San Pedro de Macorís, where they were also introduced to community members participating in the GEF SGP project in Barrio Blanco that is working to raise awareness and clean-up the river.

GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme shares lessons learned with IWeco

IWeco's RPSC 3 (see pg.1) welcomed Dr. Fononga Mangisi-Mafiello, Communications and Knowledge Management Adviser from the GEF Pacific Ridge to Reef Programme, as part of a knowledge-sharing exercise supported by IW:LEARN. Dr. Mangisi-Mafiello presented emerging lessons and highlighted the importance of strategic planning, inter-project collaboration, review of processes, capturing of lessons and sharing experiences. She highlighted that project sustainability should be enhanced by the installation of trained, permanent staff in various government agencies. Later in the day, Dr. Mangisi-Mafiello led a closed working session with National Project Coordinators on community engagement and citizen science. Her presence and presentations were well-received by all, as was the opportunity to engage in this South-South dialogue within the GEF family of projects.



Session on community engagement and citizen science in progress — Dr. Mangisi-Mafiello at centre (in blue).

IWEco support to CEP COP 15, SPAWCOP 10 and LBSCOP 4

IWEco was pleased to support the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention, the Caribbean Environment Programme, as it convened its biennial meetings in Honduras between 3 – 6 June 2019. These included the Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAWCOP10), the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSCOP4), and the Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (CEPCOP15).

Among the issues discussed at LBSCOP4 was Marine Litter - a huge problem being faced throughout the Caribbean and worldwide!

#CleanSeas - Engaging the public's attention

In February 2017, UN Environment launched the #CleanSeas Campaign to engage governments, the public, civil society, and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic litter. It aimed to address the root-cause of marine litter by targeting the production and consumption of non-recoverable and single-use plastic. More than anything else, #CleanSeas aims to highlight the scale of the problem.

By April 2019, sixty governments – accounting for more than 60% of the world's coastline – had signed up to the #CleanSeas Campaign and many have begun making specific commitments to protecting oceans, encouraging recycling and cutting back on single-use plastics. Some have created marine reserves and adopted national plans on recycling and waste management.

Following preparation of a technical research brief on the implementation of Styrofoam and Single Use Plastic Bag bans in the Caribbean in 2018, UN Environment CEP produced an interactive map to help in the tracking of progress. This is part of the effort to raise awareness, throughout the region, on progress made to reduce marine pollution from trash.

In the Wider Caribbean Region, nine countries have so far signed up to the campaign: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Grenada, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In July 2019, IWEco will contribute by launching a new #CleanSeas video – the Caribbean Breaking up with Plastics!

Look out for it!



Holland Bay, East Coast of Jamaica, 2018, strewn with plastic waste and other debris, in addition to sargassum



IOCARIBE-XV and SIDS

IWEco's Communications Specialist represented the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention, UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme, at the Fifteenth Session of the UNESCO IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE-XV) which took place 7 - 10 May 2019 in Oranjestad, Aruba.

As ocean management in the region faces many challenges, the range of presentations and discussions was wide. The capacity development needs of SIDS as well as the importance of knowledge-sharing amongst SIDS - not least the possibility that we can become laboratories for innovation - were highlighted.

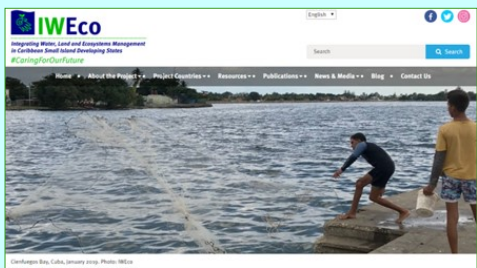
In a presentation on 7 May, IOCARIBE-XV also highlighted that the United Nations has proclaimed a

Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development: 2021 - 2030!

Find out more at: <https://en.unesco.org/ocean-decade>



On 18 May 2019, in Havana, IWEco Cuba took delivery of four new vehicles which will enable project activities!



www.iweco.org

Our website was launched on 30 April 2019!

Keep informed of project activities.

IWEco Saint Lucia Project featured at GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop's Knowledge Day

The Global Environment Facility's recently held Expanded Constituency Workshop showcased IWEco's Saint Lucia National sub-Project as a good example under the theme: Landscape Approach for Blue Economy and Sustainable Finance, on its Knowledge Day, 30 May 2019 in Saint Lucia.



Of particular interest were the policy implications of the project, community involvement in planning and implementation of the project, collaboration amongst different ministries, livelihood aspects and mainstreaming. Among those who made presentations on various aspects of the project were: Alfred Prospere, Acting Chief Forest Officer, who is also IWEco's National Focal Point/Project Director; Michael Bobb, Manager, Soufriere Marine Management Association (SMMA); Nadia Cazaubon, a Director at Caribbean SEA, one of the communication partners under the IWEco project; a representative of the Fond St. Jacques Development Committee; and Dr. Donatian Gustave, the Assistant Chief Forest Officer.

We salute the Saint Lucia National sub-Project for its hard work to engage national and community stakeholders - so important for sustainable progress!



Alfred Prospere, Ag, Chief Forestry Officer



Michael Bobb of SMMA



Sandra Prospere of the Fond St. Jacques Development Committee

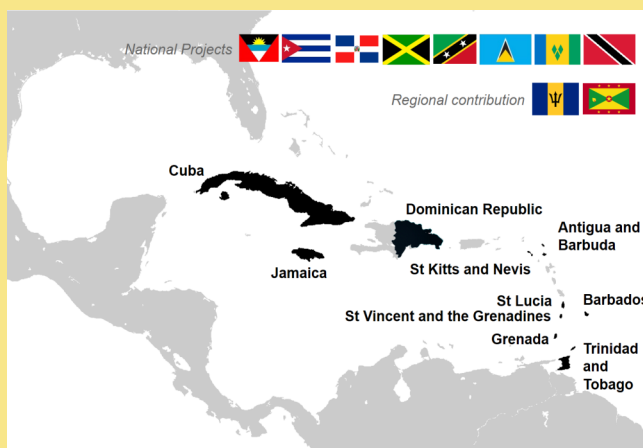
IWEco thanks all Project Partners for their contributions to this issue.

For more information contact:

**Project Coordination Unit
GEF IWEco Project
United Nations Environment Programme
14-20 Port Royal Street
Kingston, Jamaica
Phone: 1(876)-922-9267/9; Ext. 6225
Email: donna.spencer@un.org**

www.iweco.org

@caribbeaniweco



IWEco countries



*integrating water, land and ecosystems management
in caribbean small island developing states*

#CaringForOurFuture