



## ***Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States***

***#CaringForOurFuture***

### **Monthly Project Highlights**

**January 2021**

The UNEP GEF IWEco Regional Project Coordination Unit wishes you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

This e-bulletin highlights project activities, outputs and achievements in the past month in particular. Check out our website too: [www.iweco.org](http://www.iweco.org)

We invite Project partners, National Focal Points and national project management units to submit short items and links relevant to IWEco and related subjects too!



Fishing depot, Black River, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, 2019. Photo IWEco Project

## **Natural Capital Accounting in the Caribbean**

The environment provides immense value to the nations of the Caribbean, creating a foundation for the economic prosperity and wellbeing of its people; however, decisions are often made which do not fully acknowledge the value of the environment, and therefore have a negative impact on it.

On 19<sup>th</sup> January, UNEP GEF IWEco's Tenth Partners' Webinar featured a presentation on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) by Jake Kuyer, an environmental economist and principal consultant with the UK firm Economics for the Environment Consultancy Ltd. (eftec).

NCA is a structured approach to collecting data and producing environmental statistics on the value that the environment provides, such as the provision of attractive space for recreation and tourism, physical protection from sea surge and surface flooding, and abundance of natural produce from the sea and land. By translating scientific data and ecological knowledge into economic evidence for policy and planning use, natural capital accounting provides a framework for the environment to be considered alongside other economic and social decision-making.

NCA can be thought of as the framework within which environmental statistics are produced, such as through Ecosystem Service Valuation (ESV), and reported in a consistent and accessible manner for policy and planning use; therefore, conducting ESV is one means to produce evidence for the national natural capital accounts, alongside other existing economic and socioeconomic data.

Mr. Kuyer provided an explanation of the conceptual underpinnings of NCA, and the general process by which the accounts are built. Links to international initiatives, such as the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounts (UN SEEA-EA), which provide a standardised understanding of how accounts should be produced (such as by National Statistics Offices), and the Sustainable Development Goals, were also explored.

The practical application of natural capital accounting in the Caribbean was demonstrated through the UK Government funded “Caribbean Overseas Territories Regional Natural Capital Accounting Programme”. This programme is building capacity for natural capital accounting in the five Caribbean UK Overseas Territories (Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Montserrat, and the British Virgin Islands), working with local government departments, and other local organisations, to collect data and produce environmental statistics within the natural capital accounting framework. These statistics will be able to sit alongside other national economic indicators, such as GDP, to help support better decision making in the region. The programme is also developing a regional network for practitioners and engaging with the broader Caribbean community.

Applications of natural capital accounting to current challenges was also discussed. In the context of the major economic and health crises brought on by the pandemic, there is a lot of focus on how to build back economies once the health risks have subsided, and in particular, a push for a Green Recovery. Natural capital accounting can be used to reinforce a green recovery, by demonstrating the sustainable economic benefit of investment in maintaining and enhancing environmental assets, or alternately, the economic and social cost of activities which negatively impact the environment. This is of particular importance for the tourism sector, a major component of Caribbean economies, as any short-term boost to the economy from a return of tourists will be eclipsed by medium- and long-term economic losses if the environmental assets on which the sector relies are substantially degraded.

NCA can also support delivery of several of the Sustainable Development Goals, providing an evidence backed way of understanding what is driving their need and where to focus resources to achieve them. Work on establishing NCA in the Caribbean is ongoing, and it is hoped that the knowledge generated will help enable better management of the economy and the environment for the benefit of the Caribbean.

[See the presentation](#)





The St. Vincent parrot (*Amazona guildingii*). Photo Forestry Dept. St. Vincent & the Grenadines, 2020

## IWEco's St. Vincent & the Grenadines Project is underway!

Titled “Addressing Land Degradation in the Georgetown Watershed, Saint Vincent”, IWEco’s St. Vincent and the Grenadines National sub-Project will replace trees lost during the April 2011 floods as well as focus upon wildlife and environmental and forest protection and management, through inclusive range of community-based activities. It seeks to increase awareness and understanding, improve knowledge-sharing and provide information for better decision-making, strengthen management policies, build capacity and increase livelihood opportunities.

One of the project’s most anticipated activities is a census of the St. Vincent parrot (*Amazona guildingii*), endemic to the island, and one of the rarest and most magnificent parrot species globally.

The IWEco St. Vincent and the Grenadines National sub-Project is being implemented jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented “Conserving Biodiversity and Reducing Land Degradation using a Ridge-to-Reef Approach Project” which is also funded by the Global Environment Facility.

The two projects have similar objectives and activities and are being executed by a shared Project Management Unit for greater efficiency. They will also share the same National Steering Committee. Execution in the field is expected to start during the second quarter of 2021.

[Read more](#)

**BASELINE**  
Review of existing house...  
...requirements  
...REMDAP.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**  
Conduct surveys with the identified stakeholders and gather perception data; and  
Collect information about outcomes (e.g. challenges and enablers)

**ANALYSIS**  
Triangulation and further analysis conducted with all information sources.

**STAGE 03**   **STAGE 04**   **STAGE 05**

**Analysis and Reporting**  
Analytical processes include a SWOT, triangulation and

**FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING DATA PORTAL (REMDAP)**

## REMDAP Survey Results

In June 2020, the IWEco Project commissioned a scoping assessment to ascertain the feasibility and best options to establish a web-based Regional Environmental Monitoring Data



Portal (REMDAP).

This report examines the varied MEA reporting requirements (of IWEco project countries), associated data needs and data flows, and presents some scenarios for the establishment of this mechanism along with the required resources.

This exercise serves as the first Phase to contribute to this clearinghouse activity, where the next steps will be determined with input from the appropriate project and regional partners (CARICOM, ROLAC, UN ECLAC, among others).

Given COVID-19 restrictions across the region, the consultancy was undertaken virtually (with surveys disseminated to national and regional agencies within the IWEco network). The study scope included the ten IWEco SIDS and considered the Project's alignment to 15 conventions, guidelines and instruments (SDGs, Cartagena and its protocols, CBD, CITES, RAMSAR, CMS, Agenda21, RIO+ 20, Barbados PoA, JPOI, Samoa Pathway, and GPA).

The IWEco PCU envisages that the REMDAP mechanism will include tools and indicators for multi-scale applications, support improved methods for multi-scale assessment and monitoring of land degradation trends, and contribute to regional monitoring of impacts of investments in water, land and ecosystem services maintenance.

Successful development of a REMDAP could significantly transform the region's approach to reporting on sustainable development initiatives and, ultimately, decision-making.

[Read the report](#)



IWEco Trinidad & Tobago National sub-Project's Soil Study, led by the University of the West Indies and implemented by IAMovement, at National Quarries Company Ltd., Guaico, Trinidad, began in 2020. Photo IAMovement

### **COVID-19 Survey Results and Way Forward**

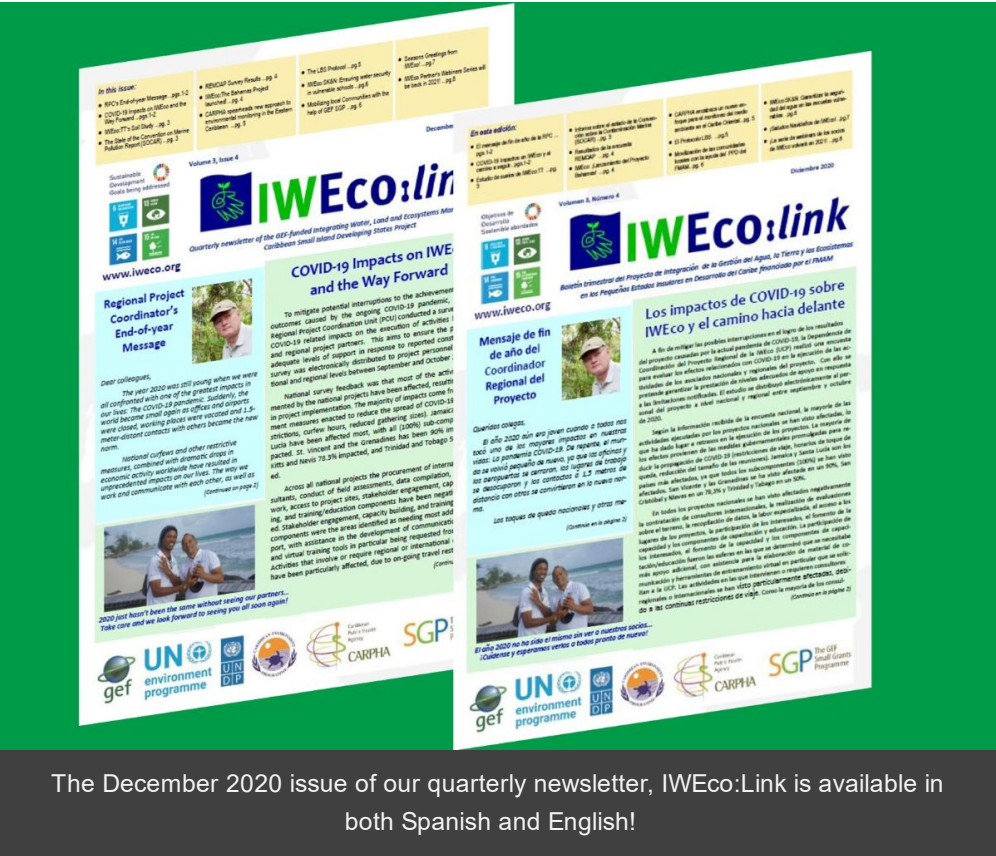
The IWEco Regional Project Coordination Unit (PCU) conducted a survey to assess COVID-19 related impacts on the execution of activities by national and regional project partners between September and October 2020. The concern is to ensure the provision of adequate levels of support in response to reported constraints.

Feedback from the national sub-projects was that government measures enacted to reduce the spread of COVID-19 have affected most of their activities, resulting in delays in project implementation. Across all national projects the procurement of international consultants, conduct of field assessments, data compilation, specialized work, access to project sites, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and training/education components have been negatively affected.

In contrast, the Regional survey did not reveal significant delays to Agency workplans. The executing agencies - the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the Caribbean Environment Programme's Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit/Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention (CAR/RCU), all reported that local expertise would be procured where necessary, and virtual platforms are being utilized for meetings and wider knowledge transfer.

The Survey results confirm the need for an extension to enable completion of activities, particularly at the national level, as well as the many regional activities which depend upon the results coming from the various countries. The recently concluded IWeco Mid-Term Review recommended an additional IWeco Project extension of up to 12 months until August 2023 for technical completion of all activities, followed by an additional period for administrative and financial closure. This will be considered in the coming months.

Read the report



The December 2020 issue of our quarterly newsletter, IWeco:Link is available in both Spanish and English!

English

Spanish



## IWEco's Kitts and Nevis National sub-Project RFP - Wastewater Pilot Project

St. Kitts and Nevis National sub-Project invites qualified Engineering consultants to submit proposals for the design of a pilot project for greywater collection, treatment and reuse within the College Street Ghaut, St. Kitts. Deadline for submissions is 15 February 2021, noon (AST).

[See the Terms of Reference](#)



The Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco Project) is a five-year, regional project that builds upon the work of previous initiatives, to address water, land and biodiversity resource management as well as climate change.

IWEco's objective is to contribute to the preservation of Caribbean ecosystems that are of global significance and to the sustainability of livelihoods.

IWEco is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment Programme) is the lead Implementing agency for national and regional sub-projects, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implementing some activities.

[www.iweco.org](http://www.iweco.org)

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Monthly E-Bulletin # 4,

**For more information contact:**

Donna Sue Spencer | IWeco Communication Specialist

email: [donna.spencer@un.org](mailto:donna.spencer@un.org)

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