



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

#CaringForOurFuture

Monthly Project Highlights

February 2021

This e-bulletin highlights activities of the GEF UNEP IWEco Project in the month of February 2021 which included World Wetlands Day. Despite Covid-19 restrictions and associated challenges in all participating countries, we are seeing progress in activities, including those in the field. Check our website too: 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! For more information contact Donna Sue Spencer at donna.spencer@un.org.



Cades Bay Wetland, Nevis, 2019. Photo: IWEco SKN

**World Wetlands Day 2021:
Protecting our Wetlands so that they can**

continue to protect us

February 2nd marked the annual celebration of World Wetlands Day. First observed in 1997, World Wetlands Day is intended to increase awareness on the importance of wetlands and promote their conservation. Several IWEco National sub-Projects include wetlands. Here IWEco's regional execution partner, CARPHA, reflects on the importance of Wetlands for Water, following the theme in 2021.

[Read more](#)



Heading up the South Negril River towards the Negril Great Morass, 2020. Photo: IWEco

The WOW factor and the Negril Great Morass

The Negril Great Morass, neatly nestled in the hinterland of Negril, provides a home for many species of endemic flora and fauna, makes Seven Mile Beach what it is, and is the site of Jamaica's IWEco National sub- Project.

In recognition of the site's importance to Jamaica's wetland targets, the Negril Great Morass featured in several learning activities for this year's World Wetland Day celebrations on 2nd February. It made waves on the Negril South River through the enactment of a Safari tour.

In alignment with the W.O.W. (Why Our Wetlands?) public awareness campaign, teachers from five schools in the Negril Environmental Protection Area participated in the ecotour. The activity sought to give teachers an appreciation of the biological and ecological significance of the area. This 'Train the Trainer' approach was adapted to provide support for the effective delivery of environment-related lessons to their students. The activity was also meant to provide a foundation for interactive class sessions to be rolled out in coming months in the various schools participating in the W.O.W. campaign.

[Read more](#)





Youth in Action cleaning up the coastal zone in St. Kitts

Youth in Service Day 2021 was marked on 13th February in St. Kitts and Nevis with the largest ever coordinated beach clean up. The Caribbean Youth Environment Network in St. Kitts and Nevis (CYEN in SKN) partnered with the Department of Youth Empowerment to lead beach clean ups on ten (10) beaches all over the island of St. Kitts. Over 172 volunteers rallied to clean up more than 930 kg of trash from the coastal zone. IWEco SKN supported this wonderful effort!

[Read more](#)



A Quarry Rehabilitation Champion in the IWEco Trinidad & Tobago National sub-Project, describes how participation in the project has made a difference in her life, 2019. Photo: IWEco

**IWEco and CANARI:
Supporting nature-based enterprises and**

sustainable livelihoods

One of the aims of the GEF IWECO Project is to assist in the development and strengthening of nature-based enterprises in and around national sub-project sites. Following Recommendation 10 of the IWECO Mid-Term Review (MTR), the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is beginning a two-year project under IWECO to strengthen and support stewardship and sustainable and climate-resilient livelihoods in IWECO countries to in turn facilitate healthy and resilient ecosystems. This will be achieved through the implementation of four inter-linked intervention areas:

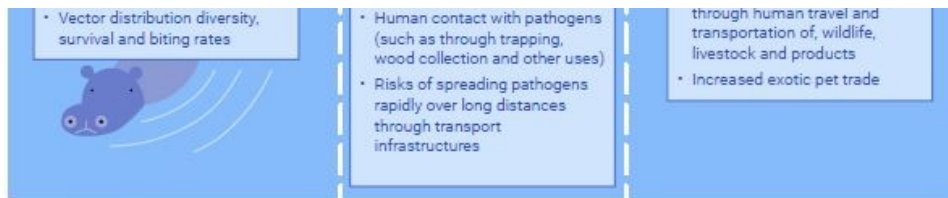
- 1. Enhancing ecosystem stewardship to support sustainable livelihoods of surrounding communities:** Activities to build the capacity of community nature-based entrepreneurs and resource users in the surrounding communities to take stewardship actions to protect ecosystems upon which their livelihoods and well-being depend.
- 2. Strengthening community enterprises to ensure sustainable use and enhance socio-economic benefits to surrounding communities:** Nature-based community enterprises/SMEs which are dependent on local natural resources (goods or services) for their operations and processes will be targeted to establish and/or strengthen their capacity to deliver triple bottom line (environmental, social and economic) co-benefits.
- 3. Building resilience of livelihoods to climate change:** Activities to 'climate proof' community nature-based enterprises in the target GEF-IWECO countries.
- 4. Knowledge sharing for sustainable nature-based livelihoods:** Activities to scale out approaches such as ecosystem stewardship, business strengthening and climate proofing beyond the target SMEs and project life cycle.

This project will be introduced by CANARI at IWECO's next two Partners' Webinars. On 2nd March 2021, the 13th Partners' Webinar will focus on the role of National Project Coordinators and National Focal Points, and on 16th March 2021, the 14th Partners' Webinar will look at the possible roles of the GEF Small Grant Project (SGP) Coordinators in participating countries and the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN).

Stay tuned for more information about this initiative which we believe is important for the sustainability of the IWECO approach in participating SIDS.

8.1. Pathogen spillover events





Source: United Nations Environment Programme (2021). Making Peace with Nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies.

Making Peace with Nature

"The COVID-19 pandemic, which was still unfolding at the time of the completion of this report, illustrates why the transformation to a sustainable future needs to be accelerated. Science plays a pivotal role in informing policies that can drive this transformation, and a key area that needs to be better understood is the interaction between society and nature. The emergence of new infectious diseases in humans, animals and plants can be exacerbated by human activities. Activities that contribute to ecological degradation can increase the risk of zoonotic-origin disease from wildlife through increased human contact with pathogens and changes in pathogen ecology. These activities include climate change, land-use change and fragmentation, agricultural intensification, deforestation, and legal and illegal commercial wildlife trade."

- United Nations Environment Programme (2021). Making Peace with Nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies.

On 18th February, the first UNEP synthesis report titled: "Making Peace With Nature: A scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies" was launched ahead of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5). It is based on evidence from global environmental assessments and communicates how climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution can be tackled jointly within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

"The resulting synthesis communicates how climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution can be tackled jointly within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. The report serves to translate the current state of scientific knowledge into crisp, clear and digestible facts-based messages that the world can relate to and follow up on."

The report can be downloaded at:

<https://www.unep.org/resources/making-peace-nature>

See the report



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

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For more information contact:

Donna Sue Spencer | IWEco Communication Specialist
email: donna.spencer@un.org

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