



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

#CaringForOurFuture

Monthly Project Highlights

May 2021

This e-bulletin highlights activities of the GEF UNEP IWEco Project in the months of April and May 2021, especially the International Day for Biological Diversity which is celebrated on 22nd May. Activities continue in our participating countries and at regional level despite Covid-19 restrictions and resulting adjustments, due to the efforts of dedicated staff and partners. Check our website for updates 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! For more information contact Donna Sue Spencer at donna.spencer@un.org.



The St. Vincent Parrot (*Amazona guildingii*), found in the Jennings Valley, 2020.

Photo: Nandani Bridglal

“Vinci” and the mighty La Soufriere volcano

A vulnerable parrot faces a devastating threat with the help of friends

On 9th April 2021, La Soufriere Volcano began a series of explosive eruptions which reached their

peak with the collapse of the dome and the beginning of pyroclastic flows on April 12th. This activity continued almost daily until recently and decimated nearby towns and agriculture, affected rivers, and blanketed the entire country in ash. People and animals had to be evacuated out of the danger zone and the country has since been preoccupied coping with a humanitarian crisis, made more challenging by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The unpredictability of the volcano led to great concern not only about the inhabitants of the island, but also about the parrots and other wildlife which would have been badly affected in the immediate zone around the volcano.

The UNEP GEF-funded IWeco Project National sub-Project in Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, which began in 2020, to address land degradation in the Georgetown Watershed, a major habitat for the parrot, includes two activities focused on the St. Vincent parrot (*Amazona guildingii*). The first is a census to be carried out in July 2021. This has become even necessary following the recent volcanic activity.

In the aftermath of the eruptions, efforts to save the parrot, locally known as "Vincie" have been led by the St. Vincent Forestry Department and are described in this article.

[Read more](#)



22 MAY 2021
BIODIVERSITY DAY
We're part of the solution
IWEco #ForNature

Biodiversity Day 2021: "We're part of the solution #ForNature"

The International Day for Biological Diversity Biodiversity Day 2021 is being commemorated through an online-only campaign, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity wanted to continue the momentum generated last year under the over-arching theme, "Our solutions are in nature", which served as a reminder that biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges. From nature-based solutions to climate, health issues, food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity is the foundation upon which we can build back better.

We all have a role to play in achieving the 2050 Vision of living in harmony with nature. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the world needs to work together to resolve our common challenges. We all can be part of the solution.

<https://www.cbd.int/idb/image/2021/idb-2021-overview.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWXW5cN1YVI&t=45s>

[Read more](#)

Restoration Begins with Me



Send us a photograph or a short video clip
showing how you care for plants/trees/forests
and what they mean to you

#RestorationBeginsWithMe



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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UN
environment
programme



CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL
PROGRAMME



UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON
ECOSYSTEM
RESTORATION
2021-2030

Join the conversation on Ecosystem and Forest Restoration

Are you working to take care of a piece of the earth? Do you simply love and appreciate nature? Join the conversation - Submit a photo or video that shows how you care.

The United Nations (UN) has declared 2021-2030 as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, in a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems around the world. Led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN Decade is building a strong, broad-based global movement to ramp up restoration and put the world on track for a sustainable future. Only with healthy ecosystems can we enhance people's livelihoods, counteract climate change, and stop the collapse of biodiversity.

In the Caribbean, we are inviting you to join in this rallying call and participate in the conversation on ecosystem restoration. The campaign, launched on the International Day of Forests (IDF) under the theme "Restoration Begins With Me", will culminate on World Environment Day (WED), when the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration will be formally launched. The regional campaign theme addresses both the IDF and WED themes "Forest Restoration – A Path to recovery and well-being", and "Ecosystem Restoration", respectively.

The UNEP Global Environment Facility- funded Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management (GEF-IWEco) Project, the UNEP Caribbean Sub-Regional Office (CSRO), the Cartagena Convention Secretariat and the Food and Agriculture Organization Representation for Jamaica, the Bahamas and Belize are inviting people across the Caribbean to submit a photograph with a short description, or a short video, of an activity such as tree planting or caring, or anything associated with such an activity that shows how you value plants, trees or forests, and what they mean to you.

Read the rules below and submit your photo or video to restoration-begins-with-me@iweco.org before 31st May 2021.

Qualifying photos and videos will be featured in special online publications on Ecosystem Restoration in June 2021 (with full credit), as well as in a regional environmental forum.

For more information: <http://www.iweco.org/node/347>

The email address for submissions is:

restoration-begins-with-me@iweco.org

[#restorationbeginswithme](https://twitter.com/restorationbeginswithme)

[#GenerationRestoration](https://twitter.com/GenerationRestoration)

Find out how you can participate



IWEco's Regional Laboratory Assessment published

The final report of the Regional Laboratory Assessment conducted for UNEP GEF IWEco in 2020 is now available. This assessment built upon the one previously carried out under the IWCAM Project (2006-2011) with the aim of strengthening national and regional capacity to perform environmental quality monitoring. Priority areas for assessment were expanded to include the capacity to analyse soil, sediment, and perform biota monitoring in addition to water analyses.

The survey sought to provide information on:

1. National IWEco-related environmental quality monitoring needs, including the capacity in the laboratories assessed for responding to the needs of the country.
2. The capacity of regional laboratories and Regional Activity Centres to support national laboratories to respond to demands for environmental quality monitoring in participating SIDS.
3. An inventory of the analyses currently being performed to be compared with the needs of the national IWEco sub-project (if any) and minimum parameters to be monitored under the LBS Protocol.
4. By laboratory and hence country, the equipment needs and associated training, and other training needs identified by each laboratory

The assessment has been shared with key stakeholders, many of whom either facilitated, or assisted in, responding to the survey. It makes recommendations for suitable laboratories in which to conduct capacity building activities. IWEco has committed to the provision of equipment to support environmental quality monitoring in selected laboratories, and to capacity building through training in the use and maintenance of laboratory equipment.

[Read it](#)





Growing a Future - Rehabilitating quarries, restoring nature and securing livelihoods in N.E. Trinidad

Collaboration between two Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) - the Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods (SusTrust) and IAMovement in IWeco's Trinidad & Tobago Project, funded by GEF IWeco through the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, and working in partnership with the Environmental Management Authority (which is responsible for executing the project) and National Quarries Company Limited, produced significant results in terms of restoration of degraded land and benefits to the nearby communities. Working together, these two NGOs trained Quarry Rehabilitation Champions from nearby communities in land restoration techniques and associated livelihood opportunities between 2019-2020 with very positive results.

IWeco's project partner, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) documented the application of CANARI's Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar, to assess the triple-bottom line benefits (social, environmental and economic) and governance, of the Quarry Rehabilitation Champions' participation, using a short video case study titled "Growing a Future- Rehabilitating quarries, restoring nature and securing livelihoods in North East Trinidad".

[See the video](#)



Dr. Nicole Caesar represented UNEP GEF IWeco at the GEF-Pacific R2R Project's 4th Steering Committee Meeting in Fiji, July-August 2019.

IWeco bids Nicole farewell!

With the start-up of national and regional activities and as partners began reporting on their progress, the Project was happy to have the support of Dr. Nicole Caesar as IWeco's Technical and Monitoring Specialist.

For 2 ½ years, Nicole maintained intensive contact with most, if not all, of the project partners, stimulating execution, documenting and reporting their progress. Her attention and guidance with these aspects of the project have been vital.

Nicole managed the IWeco 'Progress Dashboard' where all progress information provided by partners is stored and automatically analysed, while at the same time taking the lead in several regional surveys. The Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Regional Environmental Data Portal (REMDAP) and the recently completed regional Laboratory Needs Assessment in IWeco Project Participating Countries for Strengthening Capacity for Environmental Monitoring, were interventions that were successfully led by her.

In May 2021, Nicole was transferred from the IWeco Project Coordination Unit (PCU) to join the UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch with the Economy Division in Geneva, Switzerland.

We thank Nicole for laying the basis for sound technical implementation in the IWeco Project and supporting partners with timely progress reporting. We wish her all the best in her new role within the organisation!



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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Monthly E-Bulletin # 6,

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