



Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas Established

[Hillsborough] (JANUARY 28, 2011) Sandy Island/Oyster Bed, Moliniere-Beausejour and Tobago Cays Marine Parks this week came together in Carriacou for their first networking meeting and are pleased to announce the establishment of the Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas.

Seeking to share experiences across national borders, the staff and board members of the three marine parks updated each other about their activities and reflected on achievements made and lessons learned so far. This is the first such face-to-face meeting of the staff of all three parks.

Moliniere-Beausejour park warden Mr Cecil McQueen commented “We work with common objectives and this is a tremendous opportunity to meet our counterparts in Carriacou and in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We can learn so much by exchanging information and working together to solve some of the important issues we face”.

Representatives of the governments of both St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada attended this first networking meeting. Also represented were St. George’s University, the University of the West Indies, the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM), SusGren and the Environmental Law Institute. Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs, Mr George Prime, opened the meeting and welcomed the spirit of collaboration between the neighbouring parks.

The staff of the three marine protected areas had the opportunity to express to potential partner organisations their needs and desires for future cooperation. Mr Roland Baldeo, Marine Protected Area Coordinator from the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Grenada explained “As our reefs and oceans face increasing threats from overfishing, pollution and climate change we need to join forces. The three marine protected areas have undertaken to share information and collaborate together to promote the conservation and sustainable use of our marine resources.”

The first step that will concrete the network is a day-trip for wardens from Sandy Island/Oyster Bed and Moliniere-Beausejour Marine Parks to visit their counterparts in Tobago Cays Marine Park. There they will learn more about office and visitor centre operation, they will participate in patrols, share knowledge of mooring maintenance and see first-hand the environmental benefits that can accrue in a longer established marine park.

This initiative is a joint effort made possible with support from the US National Fish and Wildlife Service and the UNEP-Caribbean Environment Program through the Small Grant Program coordinated by CaMPAM and GCFI with funding from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support the Caribbean Challenge initiative. For more information please contact SusGren (susgrenpm@vincysurf.com telephone 784.485.8779) or CaMPAM (emma.doyle@gcfi.org).



Participants at the declaration of the Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas in Hillsborough, Carriacou (Photo: C. Morrall)

