**Ecosystem-based Adaptation: A Climate Change Adaptation Strategy** by Kerricia Hobson

There is very little room left to doubt that the climate is changing: sea levels are rising; rainfall and drought patterns are shifting; and extreme weather events are becoming more prevalent and intense, to name a few. Also, human activity—for instance coastal development and unsustainable fishing—continues to exacerbate conditions. SIDS like Grenada are especially at risk to climate change threats and to reduce vulnerability of local communities. Therefore EbA approaches use biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptive strategy. It includes such practices as sustainable management, conservation and ecosystem restoration. In addition to providing protection against impacts from climate change, and through the maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services crucial for livelihoods and human well-being, EbA strategies also contribute other social, environmental and economic benefits. These include supplying fresh water, food and fuel; regulating air quality; processing and treating waste; protecting the coast; aesthetic values; and recreation.

Adaptation interventions are meant to reduce the impacts of climate change. However there are challenges with demonstrating their effectiveness, such as: continuously shifting baselines; long timelines for strategies to reach effectiveness; and divergent concepts on what constitutes success. Yet these limitations are balanced by the fact that in many instances a plan of doing nothing is simply no longer an option.

Points of Interest:

- National integrated social-ecological vulnerability assessment and cost-benefit analyses are being conducted by CARIBSAVE to inform selection of implementation sites.
- Validation workshop to assess results will be held in the month of November. Dates TBA.

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As a tropical small island, key economic sectors—tourism and fisheries—in Grenada, as well as many livelihoods, are at severe risk from climate change threats like coastal erosion; inundation; drought; coral reef bleaching; and increasingly extreme weather events. What’s more, with high adaptation costs (relative to GDP) and low adaptive capacity, SIDS like Grenada are significantly less resilient to adverse impacts. How then is a country such as ours expected to cope?

The UNEP-EC EbA project, jointly implemented by UNEP and the Government of Grenada & with funding from the European Commission, is entitled “Building Capacity for Coastal Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in SIDS,” and is one program with the potential to boost our ability to manage impacts. It’s aim is to strengthen climate change resilience and adaptive capacity of communities and societies heavily dependent on services provided by healthy coastal ecosystems—coral reefs; sea grasses; mangroves etc. It seeks to emphasize the ability of healthy and natural ecosystems to more cost-effectively reduce disaster risk while providing additional social, economic and cultural benefits, gains that cannot be achieved through the use of traditional hard infrastructures e.g. sea walls. As one of only two countries piloting this project, Grenada has a rare opportunity to share good practices and experiences with, and thus guide the region to consider practical EbA measures in adaptive strategies. A successful program therefore will have significant implications for our ability to effectively adapt, but will also demonstrate regionally as well as globally an alternative approach to managing climate change impacts.

Meet the Team—Technical Officer

Leyana Romain is a Grenadian by birth, who grew up in the community of St. Paul’s. At an early age, she remembers journeying religiously with her father to the beach on Sundays, which caused her to developed a love for the ocean overtime.

Leyana attended the Alpha Junior School and later St. Joseph’s Convent where she was actively involved in as much extra curricular activities as she could while maintaining good grades. She completed her studies at TAMCC where she focused on Chemistry, Geography and Environmental Studies. She later graduated with honors from St. George’s University with a dual degree in Marine Biology and Wildlife Conservation. While at SGU, she was Projects and Activities Coordinator of ECO (Education Conservation Outreach), spearheading coastal cleanups and environmental forums. She was a member of the Student Government Association and also worked as a Real Estate Agent on a part time basis.

Leyana has always been a free spirit who values harmonious relationships. She is self motivated and hardworking and has shown flexibility in her abilities. She has hosted pageants and conducted T.V interviews and also took part in Mr. and Mrs. TAMCC pageant in which she was the first runner up.

Leyana did not only focus on her studies but also found the time to explore Grenada’s underwater world by becoming scuba certified and volunteering to do Reef Checks for the Molinere/ Beasejour Marine Protected Area. She also enrolled in an abroad study program at Boston University in Marine Conservation and Biodiversity. One of her most memorable experiences was sailing across the Atlantic Ocean (Sargasso Sea) for 5 weeks, doing scientific research on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster. It was through this program that she found a way to combine her interest in human well being and environmental conservation and began noticing quickly the connectivity and intricate web of interactions between the natural world and human beings. One of the things she has realized is that the more we align ourselves with mother nature, the more we become balanced beings.

Coastal EBA in SIDS - A Project Overview

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**Project Fact Sheet**

- **Project Title:**
  “Building Capacity for Coastal Ecosystem-based Adaptation in Small Island Developing States.”

- **Funding Agency:**
  European Commission

- **Implementing Agencies:**
  Government of Grenada & UNEP

- **Project Duration:**
  2.5 years

- **Project Budget:**
  $3,366,259 USD

- **Recipients:**
  Grenada and Seychelles

- **Project Type:**
  Pilot Project

- **Long Term Goal (10 years):**
  To strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of communities that depend on coastal ecosystem services provided by coral reefs and associated ecosystems.

- **Project Objectives:**

  1. Enhance and demonstrate integrated planning tools and technical guidance to assist decision-making and effective stakeholder consultation in the development of coastal EbA interventions

  2. Support relevant authorities and communities in two SIDS where climate change already places intense pressure on human livelihoods and coastal and marine resources in the selection, planning and implementation of practical EbA measures

  3. Support regional capacity-building and global transfer of good practices and experiences gained to other coastal regions as a means to scale up EbA development and implementation, including informing supportive adaptation policies, strategies and adaptation plans.

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**Meet the Team—Project Manager**

![Image of Kerricia Hobson]

Kerricia Hobson is a 29-year old born-and-bred Grenadian. She graduated from both the St. Joseph’s Convent, St. George’s and the T. A. Marryshow Community College, after which she taught at her Alma Mater before pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree at St. George’s University. During her three years at SGU, she was actively involved in student government, serving as the undergraduate president for 3 semesters before accepting the VP Operations post on the University Student Government. At this time she was instrumental in the revitalization and enhancement of the undergraduate government while maintaining a high academic standard. In addition she was the student representative on the public lecture series committee and was involved in many university recruitment activities. Her participation, engagement and dedication eventually led her to be voted by her peers as the student with the most outstanding service record from the government upon her graduation, with honors.

Kerricia returned to teaching after completing her Bachelor’s degree, at the Westmorland School. In addition to a full schedule, she provided assistance within the school with extracurricular activities, namely as science fair coordinator, as well as a Brain Bee and Knowledge Bowl coach.

As long as she could recall, Ms. Hobson has had a genuine passion for all things of the ocean. However, “with age brings a change in views,” she says as she explains her shift towards a more environmental perspective. She believes that living on an island clearly emphasizes the interconnectivity of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and so she modified her focus to include a more holistic view, namely through environmental management.

The opportunity to pursue a Master’s degree in the Netherlands in Development Studies, majoring in Agrarian and Environmental Studies presented a chance to achieve this. “Beyond the classroom,” she asserts, “the experience was an invaluable occasion to dialogue with persons from all over the world, and shaped a greater understanding of where Grenada falls within the global context.” She successfully completed her Degree, with Merit, in December 2013 and has since returned home eager to contribute to the development of her country. Working with this project, she is confident that she is making a start.

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**Did you know….?**

Agricultural practices; coastal tourism; port and harbor developments; damming of rivers; urban development and construction; mining; fisheries; aquaculture; and manufacturing, among others, are all sources of marine pollution threatening coastal and marine habitats.
Grenada has signed on to a collection of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to enable us to work together with other countries on key issues. These include: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal; United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer; United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); and International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships.

As a result, the country has made commitments that touch a wide range of areas: inclusive but not limited to: reduction of green house gas emissions; global disaster reduction; control of hazardous waste movement; protection of biodiversity; protection of the ozone layer; protection and preservation of the marine environment; protection of coastal resources against pollution; and adopting adaptation measures for climate change.

For Climate Change Adaptation, being able to effectively utilize the funds available to us is crucial. The Environment Division has a vision on how all the Climate Change projects in Grenada will interface and this is guided by key priorities outlined in the Grenada National Climate Change Policy. The GIZ ICCAS project is also working on a donor mapping matrix, which will highlight where each of the projects fit in meeting key actions within the Grenada National Climate Change Action Plan.

The UNEP-EC EbA project not only aims to create linkages with national objectives within the Grenada National Climate Change Action Plan, National Development Strategy and National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, but also to create linkages with other projects currently on the ground, and has already identified community outreach initiatives as a key area with which to form collaborations.

We must say that although we see our project as part of a national picture, its singleness lies in really trying to demonstrate the usefulness of Ecosystem Based Adaptation practices in addressing climate change. Our project will not only highlight the value and cost effectiveness of using nature to help us to confront our issues, but show how economic growth can be attained and human well being safeguarded. Additionally, our project will feature to a great extent, building local capacity across disciplines, to deal with climate change issues in the future.

Did you know….?
An estimated 50—80% of all life on Earth is found under the ocean surface.