



Caribbean Challenge SocMon underway

By Maria Pena

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funded project, *Socio-economic Monitoring by Caribbean Challenge MPA managers* (Caribbean Challenge SocMon) is underway with the first of three 5-day training workshops completed.

This workshop targeting MPA managers, field staff and other relevant stakeholders from St. Vincent and the Grenadines was held from 17–21 October in St. Vincent. Ms. Maria Pena was assisted by Ms. Katherine Blackman, both of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados – the regional SocMon agency for the English-speaking Caribbean– trained eight persons from the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority; the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP); the Fisheries Division; Forestry Department and Ministry of Tourism and Industry.



St. Vincent and the Grenadines Caribbean Challenge SocMon trainees

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The workshop was practically-oriented comprising three field trips to the demonstration study site – South Coast Marine Conservation Area (SC MCA). This MCA is due to be upgraded to St. Vincent's first Marine Protected Area (MPA). Participants were divided into two groups for demonstration of the SocMon process. This group work was integral to the success of the workshop.



Practising a key informant interview with the Coast Guard in Calliaqua, St. Vincent

During the final day of the workshop, participants started developing site monitoring plans for initiation of site assessment/monitoring at their respective sites – SC MCA and TCMP.

Once these plans have been fully developed by the groups and have been reviewed by CERMES, a sub-

grant of USD 2,500 will be disbursed to each site for initiation of monitoring. Preliminary feedback from the participants about their experiences with the training workshop has been favourable. The workshop report will be available for download within the month from the CERMES website, <http://cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes>. The potential for the development of a core set of socio-economic monitoring indicators for the Caribbean Challenge Initiative exists and both NOAA and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are interested in the outcomes of this project.

For the very first time, an amateur video of the SocMon training has been made using Flip video recorders. The video has been useful in demonstrating the SocMon training process and will soon be available for viewing. So stay in touch for news on its release

South Asia SocMon update

By Vineeta Hoon

Steady progress is being made in the data collection at all five project sites in South Asia – Havelock, Agatti, Gulf of Mannar, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Baseline data have been collected for the selected variables and are now being compiled and analyzed.

The SocMon site coordinator from the Gulf of Mannar reports that the management authority, Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust (GOMBRT) has banned the collection of seaweeds and the use of roller nets as they affect coral reefs. Subsistence fishermen, women divers and seaweed collectors are being affected by these restrictions. Wealthier fishermen are less impacted as they are able to diversify into deep sea fishing and continue to use roller nets in their trawlers.

At Lakshadweep, the administration took action to stop the resort from pumping water from the domestic wells. A survey looking at sources and amount of household income as well as perceptions and uses of MPAs, has been completed. Reef gleaning continues to be a favourite pastime for women, men and youth. Besides a break from daily chores, gleaning adds to the family income and brings food to the table.



Women gleaners in Agatti

At the Maldives, the survey to learn about the perceptions and use of MPAs by the Maldivian people has been completed and currently another survey focused on the perceptions and use of MPAs by resorts and dive schools is underway.

SocMon training for Municipal Government of Taytay

By Michael Pido

As part of its outreach program as the SocMon South East Asia (SEA) Center, trainers from the Palawan State University (PSU), Puerto Princesa City, Philippines, conducted a four-day 'Socio-economic Monitoring Methodology Training Course' at the Municipality of Taytay, Palawan Province, Philippines. Over 20 representatives from the local

government units, academic and non-governmental organizations participated in this historic event that was held at the Municipal Hall of Taytay from 18–21 October 2011. Prof. Marissa Pontillas, Ms. Eva Marie Ponce de Leon and Dr. Michael Pido served as trainers and facilitators.

The training is part of *'Saving the Last Frontier: Improved Law Enforcement and MPA Management'*, a one-year project of the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) of Taytay. Key project personnel from the MAO included Mr. Gaspar Pacionella and Mr. Hernan Felix, as well as Mr. Ryan Goehring (a US Peace Corps volunteer). The US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) provided a funding support of about US\$20,000, with counterpart funding from the Municipal Government of Taytay. The project's overall goal is to increase local government capacity to better implement fisheries laws and improve the management of Taytay Bay's current and prospective marine protected areas (MPAs).

Since socio-economic monitoring is a project component, the need to enhance the capability of local government workers to conduct socio-economic monitoring in coastal communities was duly recognized. Hence, the project leaders sought the assistance of PSU and engaged the services of its trainers to conduct the training course. At the end of the training, the following set objectives were achieved: (1) researchers, managers and key stakeholders provided with an overview and methodological procedures of SocMon; (2) selected participants trained in using the SocMon SEA methodology to generate relevant socio-economic information; (3) trainees provided with hands-on experiences in gathering SocMon data using household interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions; (4) initial processing

of the collected data; and (5) work plan prepared for the application of SocMon at selected study sites.

The Closing Program was graced by no less than Mayor Evelyn Rodriguez, the local Chief Executive of the Municipality of Taytay. She expressed her optimism that the trainees would be able to fully utilize their learning from the training towards the successful implementation of the project in particular and MPA management in general.



SocMon trainers and trainees in the Municipality of Taytay, Palawan, Philippines

That's all for 2011

By Maria Pena and Christy Loper

Well another year is about to end and We would like to take the opportunity to thank our readers for staying with us throughout 2011. In the past year the SocMonitor celebrated its first anniversary and we shared information with you on the development, implementation and outcomes of our regional projects. Here's wishing each and everyone of you a very HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON. Join us in 2012 for more socio-economic monitoring from around the world!



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