

Territory is Part of Regional Environment Report

The territory now has a regional publication with contributions from three of the territory's youth on environmental issues.

The Global Environment Outlook for youth in the Caribbean publication was launched today at a ceremony and contains prose from Ms. Akilah Corbin and Mr. Kharlon Richardson and photographs from Mr. Dexter Penn.

Ms. Angela Burnett Penn of the Conservation and Fisheries Department welcomed attendees to the ceremony and spoke of the significance of such publications and what it means for our future environmental outlook.

"Today culminates the efforts that have been ongoing for a number of years. This publication symbolizes more than just a collection of thoughts, ideas and expressions. It tells us that we have a new generation of environmental leaders coming on scene that we can all be very proud of," Ms. Burnett Penn said.

Mrs. Persia Tobin-Evelyn from the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports in her remarks acknowledged the contribution of the former Youth Affairs and Sports Director Mr. Robert Chalwell for his contribution towards the report.

Following the remarks, official presentations of the report were handed over to Mr. Clyde Lettsume Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour, Ms. Beverly Brathwaite, Acting Deputy Chief Education Officer and representatives from the Library Services, Conservation and Fisheries Department and the Elmore Stoutt High School Environmental Club.

Ms. Lenette Lewis the Caribbean Youth Environment Network coordinator briefed attendees of the history of the CYEN and their efforts that led to the publication and launch of the Global Environmental Outlook for Youth in the Caribbean report.

A regional launch for the GEO Report was held in Grenada on November 1, 2008 and country launches were held today in the 13 Caribbean countries with CYEN chapters.

The report is divided into three parts—the state of the environment in the Caribbean which includes, coastal and marine zones, forests, land and food and biodiversity; youth in action; and future outlook.

The youth component of the GEO project presents the environmental concerns and proposals of young people. The report is the culmination of five years of work from more than 150 young people between the ages of 15 and 29 who described different environmental issues in their respective communities.

The Global Environment Outlook for youth in the Caribbean report aims to inspire youth to participate in environmental management programmes that will bring environmental issues to the forefront of development strategies in collaboration with other sectors of society and government.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour has endorsed the programme because it considers the involvement of young people in environmental management an essential part of achieving Government's vision of protecting, managing and preserving the natural inheritance of the Virgin Islands.

Your Thoughts:

pelican

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congratulations to the next generation of environmentalists. let's hope they don't get discouraged with the lack of government involvement with the real cases pending today, as opposed to just lip service and idealism. there is a real crisis afoot in organizing sustainable development while giving priority to crucial and recognized areas like Beef island, long bay-beef island and smugglers cove (and carrot bay) which are or will be under assault from the needs of tourism. hopefully the next generation - who have been trained and educated in the states- will convey the bigger picture and how these areas impact how the BVI will be viewed. they understand that tourism depends on the environment, as well as fishing livelihoods, replenishing

fishing stock, and natural barrier protection from storms etc. Repeatedly, visitors have said they come for the natural beauty and if they wanted to stay at a resort on the beach, they could stay at home. Let us hope that the ministers in power take heed of what the newly trained activists have to say. Let's hope that Town and Country will take a page from the newly educated resources available to them and not make the repeated mistakes that will ruin the character of the territory forever. Congratulations to miss Burnett Penn for her vision and drive to help make this happen. Hopefully, the government, in setting a good example in making their walk match the talk, will step up and challenge some of the resorts in question or be doomed in repeating irreversible mistakes. once it's gone, it's gone.

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(Attendees at the Global Environment Outlook for Youth in the Caribbean Launching Ceremony, sign up and browse through the selection of publications after the ceremony which was held on December 3, 2008 at the Central Administration Complex.)