

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caribbean Water Professionals Meet in Paramaribo, Suriname

In a time where several Caribbean territories continue to experience the most severe drought conditions the region has seen in several years, the Global Water Partnership Caribbean (GWP-C) will hold its 5th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on May 1st, 2010 in Paramaribo, Suriname to discuss and propose plans of action for improved water governance and strategy to move forward in the implementation of an holistic approach to water resources management in the region.

GWP-C is the Caribbean arm of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) Organisation, a global network of partners all working toward 'A Water Secure World.' GWP-C's mission is to support Caribbean countries in the sustainable management of their water resources, through the promotion of a coordinated approach to managing water resources in the region, called Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

The Minister of Natural Resources of Suriname, Dr. Gregory Rusland will deliver the feature address at the opening ceremony of the 5th AGM. Additionally, remarks will be given by the Country Director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Dr. Thomas Gittens, Dean of the Faculty of Technology of the Anton De Kom University, Hans Martinus and Chair of GWP-C, Professor Jacob Opadeyi.

Its AGM is a fundamental part of the organisation's operations as all GWP-C partners are invited to this yearly forum to discuss and review its activities, workplans and reports in order to provide strategic direction and policy. GWP-C currently has partners in over twenty (20) Caribbean territories and its previous Annual General Meetings (AGMs) from 2006 to 2009 have been held in Trinidad, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Guyana respectively.

The Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the GWP-C will take place at the Conference Room-University Guesthouse of its partner, the Anton De Kom University of Suriname. The University is a very active partner of GWP-C and has been consistently involved in major ongoing water related projects in the country. These include the development of a Suriname Water Resources Information System (SWRIS) project which was launched in Suriname on August 27th, 2009, and is being spearheaded by the Anton de Kom University and has been endorsed by various local, regional and international organisations. The SWRIS project seeks to establish an online digital water portal/platform of water related information in Suriname, which will promote the conservation of aquatic resources in the country and at the same time enable more data to be accessible to the wider public.

The University is also a key partner in a recently launched 2 year project called *"The Management of Water Resources in North-West Suriname Under Climate Change Conditions"* which is scheduled to be completed in October 2011. The overall objective of the project is to develop water resources management strategies for a sufficient drinking water supply in urban and rural areas and sufficient irrigation water supply in the agriculture areas in the agricultural district of Nickerie in Suriname.

At this year's meeting, one of GWP-C's priority areas will be discussions on the establishment of Caribbean Country Water Partnerships (CWPs). A Caribbean CWP can be seen as a body of all GWP-C partners in a country all with the objectives of promoting the principles of IWRM and providing a forum for bringing water stakeholders and users from various sectors apart from water in the Caribbean region together for knowledge sharing and implementation of action programs for an integrated approach to managing the region's water resources.

About GWP-C

Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) is a working partnership among all stakeholders in water management within the Caribbean region and was formally launched in Tobago in June 2004.

GWP-C currently has partners in the following territories: Anguilla, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

To learn more about the organisation and its activities, visit www.gwp-caribbean.org

Contact:

Gabrielle Lee Look - Communications Officer
Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) Secretariat
C/O NIHERST
43-45 Woodford Street, Newtown
Port-of-Spain,
Trinidad and Tobago, W.I.
Tel: +868 622 3117
Fax: +868 622 1589
E-mail: gleelook@gwp-caribbean.org

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