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16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

## **Regional Workshop on Wastewater Management -**

### **Focus on Wastewater as a Resource**

**17<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago**

The Global Environment Facility-funded Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (GEF CREW) Project is convening its final regional capacity building workshop at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 15 – 19 February 2016.

Wastewater as a Resource will be the focus of the Workshop's third day, 16<sup>th</sup> February, as a panel of regional experts discusses treated wastewater reuse and its many benefits, particularly in the Region's increasingly water scarce environments, and, as participants consider how to create an enabling environment to take advantage of the many potential opportunities to generate revenue from wastewater management – a 'win-win' for both local communities and Governments. Throughout the Caribbean, countries are experiencing more frequent and more prolonged drought periods. The rainy season which typically lasts from the beginning of June to the end of November, has been drier than normal in recent years, with a similar forecast being predicted for 2016.

The **GEF CREW Regional Policy and Enforcement Workshop** is focusing on the sharing of experiences related to the development and implementation of policies, laws and regulations concerning wastewater management in the Project's 13 participating countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Panama, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago.

GEF CREW is an integrated and innovative approach to reducing the negative environmental and human health impacts of untreated wastewater discharges which have negative effects on marine resources and are a threat to the region's economic development and quality of life of its people. Co-implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Inter-American

Development Bank (IDB), and working through three interlinked components, it has aimed to provide sustainable financing for the wastewater sector; to support policy and legislative reforms, and; to foster regional dialogue and knowledge exchange amongst key stakeholders.

Caribbean countries have long indicated the need for assistance in the form of guidelines that would assist them in developing and updating policies, laws and regulations for improving wastewater management and planning, including more effective enforcement of existing laws. THE GEF CReW Project has sought to provide this guidance by providing tools to assist in the development of national plans, policy, legislation, regulations and institutional strengthening.

The Project, which began in 2011, is in its final year. As this is its last regional meeting, there will also be a reflection of its challenges and achievements which have included:

- An improved understanding of the need to consider a wider range of financing options, depending upon different country situations and realities.
- An increase in awareness amongst decision makers, the media and the wider public of the importance of good wastewater management.
- Increasing stakeholder consultation at national level as countries work to improve their policy, legislative and institutional frameworks to enable better wastewater management.
- Training of more than 400 technicians, government officials, and other stakeholders in various aspects of wastewater management, e.g., wastewater treatment technologies, operator assessments, management of revolving funds, and facilitation.
- An increase in regional and national level partnerships, as countries seek to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, and to learn from each other.

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**Information on the Project may be found at: [www.gefcrew.org](http://www.gefcrew.org) and the Project's Facebook page: [GEFCReW](#)**

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