

PRESS RELEASE

GEF/SGP grants Protecting Biodiversity in Warappa Creek

Paramaribo, 19 March 2012. - Today, the Global Environment Facility / Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) and Foundation Warappa have agreed to promote biodiversity and sustainable income generation in the Bakkie community in the district of Commewijne for the next two years.

Marcia de Castro, UNDP Resident Representative, and Bas Spek, director of Foundation Warappa, signed the agreement at the United Nations House in Paramaribo. Through this accord, GEF/SGP will contribute to the work of the foundation with a 50,000 USD grant.

The grant will support the sustainable management of this protected area through different interventions that will positively affect the infrastructure of the area as well as community sensitization to promote the conservation of biodiversity through sustainable tourism, agriculture and other economic activities.

The Bakki community falls within the North Commewijne Marowijne Multiple Use Management Area (MUMA), where recreational and tourism activities are significantly increasing as a result of the tourists visiting the well known Warappa creek. MUMAs are designated to maintain biological productivity, ensure the health of globally significant wildlife and protect resources for sustainable livelihoods.

The *Sustainable Tourism Project at Bakki* will include infrastructure projects that will prevent flooding in the community during high tide as well as raising awareness on the unique biodiversity of the region. The co-financer for the infrastructure project is the ministry of Public Works, who recently also finalized the construction of a pier. Regarding the promotion of biodiversity, the grant will fund several activities to raise awareness among community members about the social and economical value of biodiversity and its important role in promoting sustainable income generation.

The current project funded by GEF/SGP will contribute to the ultimate idea of the MUMA, promoting economical and social development from a conservation and sustainable perspective.

The project will join the other 17 projects funded by the GEF/SGP in Suriname with a total investment of approximately 750, 000 USD in the last three years.

About GEF/SGP

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is funded by the Global Environmental Facility as a corporate programme, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). At present, 137 countries participate in SGP having ratified the conventions on biological diversity and climate change. All projects funded by the GEF SGP must comply to at least one of the GEF focal areas; conservation of biodiversity, climate change abatement and resilience, prevention of land degradation, elimination of chemicals and Persistent Organic Pollutants and protection of international waters.

Suriname joined SGP in 1997, and has implemented around 70 projects with a total investment of USD 1.6 million.

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