



National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)



Press Release

(23rd August 2010)

The Guyana Mangrove Restoration Project ran another fun successful youth retreat session Sunday 23 August 2010, this time with the community of Mon Repos, East Coast Demerara. During the session which started at 10:45 hrs and ended at 14:00 hrs, the participants were guided through an interactive learning session on the importance and uses of mangroves. The youth participants conducted wildlife observations and had an opportunity to reflect on their findings from their walks along the beach and within the neighborhood. It was a high-energy session filled with enthusiasm and not a single shy speaker in the bunch. Everyone loved the opportunity to dabble in mud and explore the beach, running after crabs and uncovering life-forms from under garbage and debris.

Approximately 30 participants attended the session with ages that ranged from 8-16 years. In addition, 20 young men who played cricket also joined initially for the first part of the session. They included fishermen and boat operators, some of whom might be affected by replanting of mangroves. Another discussion will be held specifically with this group to problem solve some of these challenges.

The sessions with youth is viewed as one of many opportunities that can help to strengthen community ownership and participation in the monitoring of mangroves in the longer term. The youth sessions are part of a suite of interventions which will target various stakeholders especially at the community level over the next three years.

Mon Repos was selected as one of the sites identified for replanting of mangroves. In speaking with some older residents in the area, they acknowledged the importance of mangroves for their protection against overtopping of the sea. Many of these older persons recalled when mangroves were more abundant and since their depletion, they have seen erosion of the land where the shoreline has now crept closer to their homes. Currently, on the stretch of beach where the young men would gather to play cricket every Sunday, the view of where an old Koker lays in the sea is a vivid reminder of what will happen when mangroves are lost.

Together with other sea defense methods mangroves will help to protect the community of Mon Repos.

The Mangrove Restoration Project will continue to work along with Mon Repos beach residents to build ownership for these kinds of activities. The session was organized by the Community Development Specialist, Paul McAdam and was co-facilitated by C. Chin (consultant). The youth session is planned as one of several to be implemented among the communities selected for replanting of mangroves. The project will be implemented over the three years with NARI as the lead institution with support from the Ministry of Agriculture and donor support from the European Union.

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