



IMPROVING FOREST AND PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Approximately 60 percent of the land area of Trinidad and Tobago is covered by forests and other wooded land. These areas are crucial to the health of the planet and to the livelihoods of the people who depend on the resources they provide. For these reasons, they have been designated as Protected Areas (PAs).

The management of these PAs has been fragmentary in nature, owing to the fact that multiple laws have been established regarding their organization and maintenance. Pressure from various stakeholders has also been placed on PAs, posing a threat to biodiversity and causing degradation. The wildlife population has declined in many of these areas, putting species in both terrestrial and nearby marine ecosystems at risk. This project was designed to build upon existing efforts to prevent biodiversity loss and to make the management of PAs in Trinidad and Tobago more effective. The development of a cohesive PA system and the creation of a related funding mechanism were central goals of the project.



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WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

An independent Forest and Protected Area Management Authority (FPAMA) was meant to be established under the project; however, the review and passing of legislation for this purpose was postponed on the agenda of the Parliament. The Forestry Division (FD) and the Department of Natural Resources and Forestry (DNRF) of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) stepped in to fill this gap. The project was made up of four components. The first component brought about improvements to the legal and institutional arrangements for PA management. This was done through the consolidation of the PA system and through the introduction of improved management practices. In addition, conservation efforts were strengthened through the carrying out of a baseline survey on 33 species and the development of related monitoring protocols. Monitoring activities were put on hold due to the Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) pandemic; however, they began as soon as the restrictions allowed. Under the second component, improvements were to be made to infrastructure for the conservation of biodiversity and the restoration of forests. A lack of funding meant that some of the originally envisioned activities could not take place; however, some equipment was provided, and some rehabilitation occurred. The development and testing of a sustainable financing system was the objective of the third component. A sustainable financing study was carried out and a plan was developed. It was awaiting review and endorsement at the time of writing. The final component focused on the successful monitoring and evaluation of the project and the dissemination of project information.

KEY FACTS

Contribution
USD 2 790 000

Duration
June 2015 – July 2020

Resource Partner
Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Partners
Ministry of Planning and Development; Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries; Tobago House of Assembly

Beneficiaries
Forestry Division; Department of National Resources and Forestry; local Non-governmental Organizations and Community-based Organizations; and forest resource users

IMPACT

It is expected that the consolidation of the PA system and the enhancement of local capacities to effectively manage PAs will lead to the improved conservation of biodiversity in Trinidad and Tobago. It is also expected that local livelihoods will be supported by promoting the sustainable use and management of PAs.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- Draft legislation was prepared for the management of forests, wildlife and PAs.
- A National PA System Plan was finalized and approved by the government.
- Six new sites were proposed as Pilot Protected Areas (PPAs), and the management of these PPAs was improved through the development of Management Plans and the building of staff capacities.
- Training sessions were carried out for staff of the FD, THA and other key stakeholders on best practices in PA management and biodiversity and conservation.
- A Management Information System (MIS) was developed and launched, and training on the system took place.
- Research and monitoring guides were developed and are being implemented for PA management.
- A public education and awareness programme was designed and implemented.
- Threats to biodiversity conservation were identified and are being addressed.
- A national biodiversity information system was developed and launched.
- Senior staff and PA managers were trained in budget planning, tourism revenue management, project management and innovative financing techniques.
- The funding requirements for PA management were assessed.
- Communication and outreach materials, as well as periodic reports on the progress of the project were produced and circulated.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Project Code

FAO: GCP/TRI/003/GFF

Donor: 4769

Project Title

Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago

Contact

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Partnerships and Outreach

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