



Media release

Date: Saturday 1st March 2013

Dennery Island on the road to recovery after goats removal

Saturday 1st March 2013, Dennery – The Saint Lucia National Trust, owner of Dennery Island, would like to extend its thanks and appreciation to the owners of the goats and sheep that until recently were grazing on the offshore island. During September of last year, these livestock owners cooperated fully with the National Trust and the Saint Lucia Forestry Department in a successful effort to remove all livestock from the island. This is an important milestone in efforts to recover the vegetation, and the wildlife, on Dennery Island.

The cooperation of the livestock owners – Mr. Julian Raggie, Ms. Odile Eudovich and Mr. Calixtus Cox – has been instrumental in achieving this milestone. Rats were removed from Dennery Island in 2005 by the Forestry Department and the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. But over many years, the vegetation on the island has become badly damaged by livestock grazing and erosion of the topsoil has become a serious problem. The removal of the livestock is one of the first steps in a new project, which see the National Trust and the Forestry Department collaborating with overseas conservation organizations the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Fauna and Flora International.

Mr. Bishnu Tulsie of the Saint Lucia National Trust said “The support of the Dennery livestock owners has, and will continue to be, a huge help to the efforts of the Trust and our partners to restore Dennery Island. The important thing now is to ensure that no more livestock are put back onto this site, and also that other activities like cutting trees or lighting fires, are not allowed to interfere with the recovery of the island’s vegetation and soils.”

Mr. Alfred Prospere of the Saint Lucia Forestry Department, and lifelong Dennery resident, commented: “Dennery Island is a distinctive and well-known feature of the community. We now have a real chance to stop its deterioration and bring it back to its former glory.”

As a next step, a site management plan for Dennery Island, along with Praslin Island, is being developed which will include consultations in November with people living in and around the communities of Dennery and Praslin.

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Notes to editors:

Dennery Island is one of five offshore islets around Saint Lucia that are managed for wildlife conservation by the Saint Lucia Forestry Department. The others are Praslin Island, Rat Island and the two Maria Islands, Maria Major and Maria Minor. Dennery Island and the Maria Islands are vested in the Saint Lucia National Trust. These sites are free from non-Saint Lucian, introduced predators like mongooses and rats and, because of this, are important sanctuaries for some of Saint Lucia’s most vulnerable wildlife species.

The removal of goats from Dennery Island was an activity of the “Islands without Aliens” project, whose name is a reference to offshore islands being kept free of Invasive Alien Species. This project is funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

The development of site management plans for Dennery Island, Praslin Island, Rat Island and the Maria Islands is an activity of the project “Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean”. This regional project is funded by the Global Environment Facility and led, in Saint Lucia, by the Forestry Department.

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The Saint Lucia Forestry Department, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology

(http://malff.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49&Itemid=56)

The Forestry Department is the principal agency responsible for managing forest and wildlife resources on the island of Saint Lucia. Its mission is to protect and conserve the natural resources for the protection of the environment and to obtain maximum utilization consistent with sustainable development with regards to the welfare of the rural communities and the country as a whole. The Department's motto "La Forway Say La Vie" (The Forest is Life) provides a simple yet fundamental principle for the sustainable management of a small, tropical island.

The Saint Lucia National Trust (<http://www.slunatrust.org/>) is not only the longest serving environmental and heritage membership organisation on the island, but also the only membership organisation with a legal mandate to conserve both the natural and cultural heritage of Saint Lucia.

Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (www.durrell.org) is an international charity working globally to save species from extinction. Headquartered in Jersey, in the Channel Islands, Durrell focuses on the most threatened species in the most threatened places.

Durrell's philosophy emphasises the need for our three core conservation pillars to work together: a wildlife park in Jersey as a centre of animal husbandry and knowledge, disciplined management of conservation programmes in the field and an International Training Centre to build conservation capacity. Durrell's belief is that lasting and effective wildlife conservation can be achieved where these three components are in harmony. In the Eastern Caribbean, Durrell is based in Saint Lucia and presently supports conservation efforts in Saint Lucia, Montserrat and Antigua.

Fauna & Flora International (www.fauna-flora.org) protects threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and take account of human needs. Operating in more than 40 countries worldwide – including four in the West Indies – FFI saves species from extinction and habitats from destruction, while improving the livelihoods of local people. Founded in 1903, FFI is the world's longest established international conservation body and a registered charity.

For an interview with Bishnu Tulsie, the Director of the Saint Lucia National Trust, please contact: [452-5005](tel:452-5005).

Pictured below is a photo of Dennery Island and goat removal activity.

