Guyana recognises SMEs as a key pathway in its transition to a Green State

Port of Spain, October 25, 2018 – Caribbean governments are recognising the importance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the transition to green-blue economies that are more environmentally sustainable, inclusive and resilient. Guyana has now outlined its bold plans for becoming a Green State by 2040.

This was the focus of the recent “Green Guyana International Small business Expo and Summit” held in Georgetown between October 18th to 20th. Guyana will soon finalise its “Green State Development Strategy,” a national development plan which will provide long-term vision and guidance for the country’s economic, social and environmental development. SMEs are seen as a key pathway to becoming a Green State in a way that is fair and inclusive.

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) was among over 250 participants from civil society, government organisations, international bodies such as the United Nations and other regional organisations present at the Expo.

CANARI was represented by its gender and entrepreneurship expert, Ms Akosua Edwards, who conducted workshops with over twenty-five entrepreneurs at the Expo using a pioneering CANARI tool called the Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar. This tool helps SMEs to determine how they are doing in delivering “triple-bottom line” economic, environmental and social benefits, and identifies opportunities for them to improve. SMEs start to see themselves as part of the solution to shifting to Caribbean economies that are more environmentally sustainable, inclusive and resilient.

While at the Expo, Ms. Edwards noted that, “The Guyana Green Expo was a demonstration that there is no either or. The concept of a green economy can be viable but must engage SMEs and support them to be part of the solution for a fair and green Caribbean. Partnerships are key.”

Entrepreneurs recognise that they cannot make the shift to becoming green and social enterprises without enabling financing, policies, laws, regulations and technical support. At the Expo, Guyanese SMEs signed on to support the “Santa Cruz Declaration on Local Green Enterprises,” which is an international campaign calling for governments and international partners to enhance support to SMEs as part of the transition to fair and green economies. This campaign was born in the Caribbean and is being implemented by CANARI and other partners in the global Green Economy Coalition. This show of citizen support will be presented at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) being held in January 2019 in South Africa, which will focus on the theme “Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Economies”.

CANARI is working with the Green Economy Coalition to further advance the vision for a move towards a green, fair and resilient economies that connects local actions on the micro level, with policy interventions and the global green economy movement on the macro level. This is taking place under CANARI’s project “#GE4U:
Transformation towards an inclusive green economy in the Caribbean” being supported by funding and assistance from the European Union (DCI-ENV/2016/372-847).

ENDS

About Green Economy Coalition: The Green Economy Coalition (GEC) is a network of more than 50 civil society organisations, trade unions, businesses and campaigners, working together to accelerate the transition to a fair green economy. Prosperity for all within one planet limits is possible – but we need collective action to get there. See here for more information on the Green Economy Coalition: https://www.greeneconomycoalition.org

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 25 years. Our mission is to promote equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on capacity building, policy planning and development, research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, and fostering regional partnerships. See here for more information on CANARI: http://www.canari.org/

Connect with us:
For further information, please contact: Mr. Kevin Garcia, Senior Technical Officer, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute at kevin@canari.org or call: + 1 868 638 6062