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River Clean-up highlights the need for better waste management on South Coast, St. Vincent

Kingstown, March 25, 2024 - As 'Hairouna' commemorated National Heroes Day, March 14th also marked International Day of Action for Rivers. This year's theme, "Water for All," underscores rivers' vital role in supplying fresh water and supporting cultural activities. Like arteries, rivers sustain us from ridge to reef, highlighting how human activities in our watersheds impact coastal ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves.

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and project partners collaborated with the National Environmental Days Committee in celebration of International Day of Action for Rivers with a cleanup activity along the Warrawarrow River near the Massy bus stop in Arnos Vale on Saturday, March 16th.

This river was chosen because it flows into Great Head Bay and affects the environmental quality within the South Coast Marine Conservation Area (SCMCA), mainland St. Vincent's only marine protected area. Rich in biodiversity, the SCMCA hosts nearshore habitats, corals, seagrass beds, and mangroves, and serves as nesting sites for sea turtles and seabirds/shorebirds. The cleanup involved 23 participants from seven organizations, collecting 27 bags of garbage, weighing 394 pounds. The waste, predominantly branded fast-food containers, snack wrappers, plastic bags, and bottles, likely sourced from nearby establishments, was retrieved from the often crowded and popular gathering spot.



*Participants from; CANARI, National Parks Rivers and Beaches Authority, SVG Scouts, SVG Cubs, Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN) SVG Chapter, SVGCC Environment Club and Energize Earth.
Credit: National Parks Rivers and Beaches Authority, SVG*



*Waste removal services provided by CWSA
Credit: National Parks Rivers and Beaches Authority,
SVG*

Improper disposal of solid and liquid waste in waterways and along riverbanks is a major contributor to flood vulnerability and ecological degradation in the South Coast which affects all forms of life of the area, flora and fauna. But beach clean-up activities by civil society alone cannot adequately solve this problem. What is necessary is a coordinated public and private response.

Sustainable environmental management is everyone's responsibility, requiring a corresponding need for heightened corporate-social responsibility and public-private partnerships.

The "Pioneering a blue-green economic development model for coastal adaptation, livelihoods and sustainability in South Coast St. Vincent" project led by CANARI in partnership with the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority (NPRBA), Forestry Services, Fisheries Division, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Hotel and Tourism Association, and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Fisherfolk Cooperative, adopts a landscape approach to addressing the key

risks from climate change and land-based pollution within the SCMCA, surrounding watersheds and communities.

Pioneering a blue-green economic development model for coastal adaptation, livelihoods and sustainability in South Coast St. Vincent is a project of the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, co-financed by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection through KfW.

For more information on this project, see: <https://canari.org/cbf-eba-facility-svg/>

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About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit institute which has been working across the Caribbean islands for more than 30 years. Our mission is to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. Our work focuses on Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Equity and Justice, Participatory Governance and Resilience. For more information, see: <http://www.canari.org/>

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