



Implementing solutions for an integrated water and wastewater management for a clean and healthy Caribbean

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CRew+ Letter – The Newsletter of the GEF CReW+ Project

Biannual Publication – December 2022

In this edition:

1. Message from the Regional Coordinator
2. This is our 2022
3. Winners of GWP-Caribbean's Shark Tank Competition announced!
4. New Environmental Sensitivity Map of Puerto Cortes and Omoa Bay
5. New Regional Environmental Platform aims to Strengthen Information Management in the Wider Caribbean
6. GEF CReW+ Project develops Water Information Management System (WIMS) in Six Caribbean countries

7. 75 latrines were built in La Moskitia, Honduras (video)
8. The Dominican Republic has Incorporated Standards of Safe Wastewater Reuse Into Discharge Regulations
9. Barbados Implements the National Water Reuse Policy Promoting Behavioral Change
10. Pre-design for a Wastewater Collection and Treatment System in La Fortuna de San Carlos Developed
11. Support us on Social Media!

1. Message from the Regional Coordinator

I would like to start by wishing you the best in this period of rest, gatherings with loved ones, and reflections for a happy and prosperous new year.

Every time we take a small step to improve the water and sanitation conditions in the Great Caribbean Region, we should not forget that many people have contributed to it. For that, I wish to use the first part of this message to highlight the human quality of the colleagues in the countries and agencies that accompany the GEF CReW+ project day by day. I know that in our work we do not receive awards or honors like in other professions, but we take the greatest of acknowledgments, knowing that we have contributed with a grain of sand to keep advancing the human right to water and sanitation, and the duty to care of our Caribbean Sea.

During these three years of implementation, we have lived through a period that will be remembered in the history of humanity as a sad and difficult moment and yet filled with strength to keep improving in all aspects, from personal to professional. From the project, we would like to point up the fluidity in communications and coordination that we have developed amongst all to keep working in different circumstances and take advantage of that dynamic. Despite that the project is being implemented in a situation out of normal, this coordination would have been the norm due to the nature of the regional project in 18 countries, which will continue to implement in upcoming projects.

Soon we will delve into the last year of implementation, we are excited to see the results, but above all, it will be a year of special in-person gatherings where we will be able to meet with some of you,

know each other and be able to share experiences in a more human and necessary way.

I say farewell like always, inviting you to be attentive and keep on the work that is being done in the region, and even better, join and collaborate with us. And for those who have been with us since the beginning of our journey, thank you for your support and interest, you may rest assured that the best is yet to come.

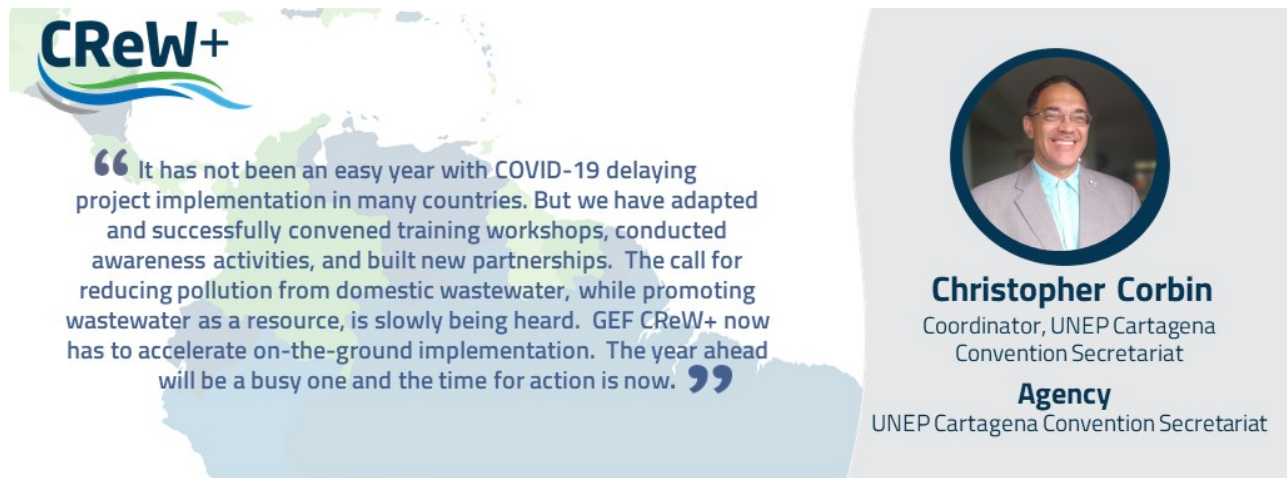
Regional Project Coordinator

Pedro Moreo




2. This is our 2022

By the PCG – 2022 has been a fruitful year for the GEF CReW+ project relevant advances have taken place in all components demonstrating the commitment from the agencies and participating countries.



CReW+

“ It has not been an easy year with COVID-19 delaying project implementation in many countries. But we have adapted and successfully convened training workshops, conducted awareness activities, and built new partnerships. The call for reducing pollution from domestic wastewater, while promoting wastewater as a resource, is slowly being heard. GEF CReW+ now has to accelerate on-the-ground implementation. The year ahead will be a busy one and the time for action is now. ”



Christopher Corbin
Coordinator, UNEP Cartagena
Convention Secretariat

Agency
UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat



Regional Advocacy for Integrated Water and Wastewater Management

St. Vincent and Grenadines has made significant progress in their ratification of the Protocol concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS).

Institutional Advances

MEXICO

- Community water governance strategy for rural communities in Quintana Roo.
- Mapping and documentation of the existing wastewater treatment plants in Quintana Roo.

GUATEMALA

Guidelines on Micro-Watershed Management Plans-PLAMIM.

COSTA RICA

Draft National Water Policy and Integrated Water Resources Management Action Plan 2022-2050.

PANAMA

- Preparation of a local guidebook on local norms and good practices in water, sanitation and solid waste management for the Isberyala community.
- Design of an educational book based on the local guidebook for the Isberyala community.

HONDURAS

- Update of the Environmental Sensitivity Map for the Municipality of Puerto Cortes and its extension to the Municipality of Omoa.
- Draft Natural Water Quality Standards for Marine-Coastal Zones.

BELIZE

Draft National Wastewater Policy.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Draft Technical Regulations for the Control of Discharges to Surface Water, Sanitary Sewage and Coastal Waters.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Draft Standard for Wastewater Reuse - Agriculture and other Applications-Requirements.

Development of new nutrient standards in partnership with the Centre of Research and Environmental Management of Transport (CIMAB, according to the Spanish abbreviation) and the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA).

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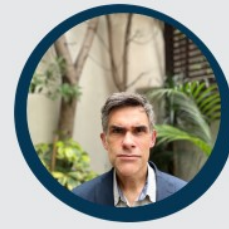
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“ In 2022 we lived through a renewed drive in the project activities. The local agencies from the countries have matured the objectives and strategic lines which are reflected in the realization of the products and outcomes. In 2023 we will see the consolidation of the project accompanied by the Steering Committee meeting in person in which we will be able to exchange experiences and lessons learned. ”



Rodrigo Riquelme
Sector Senior Lead Specialist
Water and Sanitation

Agency
Inter-American Development Bank

Steps towards sustainable Financing for IWWW



Advances in reforming the Belize Wastewater Revolving Fund, **Belize**.



Development of a Business Case for the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Innswood for the reuse of treated wastewater in **Jamaica**.

• Baseline for the development of a technical-financial mechanism with the objective of improving access to financing for sanitation projects in **Costa Rica**.

• Financial promotion workshop to find solutions for the implementation for the following stages of the treatment plant project in La Fortuna de San Carlos, **Costa Rica**.

Identification of possible financing mechanisms for installed ecotechnologies and for operating the existing treatment plants in Quintana Roo, **Mexico**.

Elaboration of a proposal for integrating reuse and promoting policy coherence in the Colombian tariff system, **Colombia**.



Support to improve wastewater management

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Designs for the rehabilitation of the wastewater treatment plant and irrigation system at Sabana Yegua, and the Universidad Autonoma de Santiago.

COSTA RICA

Feasibility study for a sewer system and wastewater treatment plant located in La Fortuna de San Carlos.

BELIZE

Feasibility study for the development of a sewer and wastewater treatment system in Caye Caulker.

SURINAME

Detailed concept for a Septage Sludge Treatment Plant.

HONDURAS

75 constructed latrines in the indigenous community of La Moskitia.

38 latrines are under construction with support from the local population.



COLOMBIA

Designs of the improvements of a wastewater treatment plant in San Antero, Cordoba; and design of an irrigation system to enable the reuse of treated wastewater.



MEXICO

Socio-environmental diagnosis for the ecotechnologies benefitting communities.



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A stylized map of the Caribbean region is shown in the background, with landmasses in light green and blue, and the surrounding ocean in a darker blue. The map is partially obscured by the text and the CReW+ logo.

“In 2022 we paved the road to move forward with public governance and sustainable financing to reduce the negative impacts of the untreated waters in the Caribbean Sea. In 2023 we will sow the seeds in several pilot projects that will help us to demonstrate that a clean and healthy ocean is possible.”



Isabelle Vanderbeck

Programme Officer
GEF International Waters

Agency

United Nations Environment Programme



IWWM Capacity Building

80
government
representatives

from the Wider Caribbean Region were certified in **"Methods to Develop the Blue Economy and the Good Use of Wastewater"** in CREW+ Academy Block 3.

47
participants
joined the capacity building **"Integrated management of crops reusing treated wastewater"** in the Dominican Republic.

36
government and
NGO representatives

from the Wider Caribbean Region were certified in **"Development of Project Formulation Skills Focused on Integrated Water and Wastewater Management"** in CREW+ Academy Block 4.

15
government
representatives
received capacity-building on the **"Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Treatment Technologies in the Dominican Republic"**.

Design of the online course on Integrated Water Resources Management In Guatemala.

277 representatives from the Wider Caribbean Region participated in the MOOC (massive online courses) "Compendium of Sanitation Systems and Technologies for the Wider Caribbean Region".



Faeces management training for government organizations and academic institutions members in Surinam.



2 Integrated Water and Wastewater Management (IWWM) Workshops:

- Journalist Communications.
- Youth Training.

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“ We are pleased that two years of effort are bearing fruit. Together with our partners in the countries, we have been able to achieve a lot of visible results, showing the progress of GEF CReW+. ”



Baerbel Schwaiger
Programme Director,
Sanitation for Millions

Agency
GIZ



Knowledge Sharing



Compendium of Sanitation Systems and Technologies for the Wider Caribbean Region.



Toolbox for capacity building in integrated water resources management and the application of Guidelines on Micro-Watershed Management Plans- PLAMIM, in Guatemala.



Advocacy



Development and execution of the GEF CRew+ Communications Plan.



Project delegation at the 31st Annual Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association Conference (CWAA).



Project delegation at the Latin American Sanitation Conference (Latinosan).



Design of a regional communication campaign to raise public awareness on the benefits of proper wastewater treatment in the participating countries of the GEF CRew+ project.



Second Steering Committee Meeting held in April, 2022.



Seven videos to raise awareness and disseminate the project in Costa Rica and Honduras.



Information Management



Development of a Regional Information Management Platform with co-financing from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).



Ongoing development of National Water Information Management Systems in five countries.

Implementing **integrated water and wastewater solutions** for a clean and healthy **Caribbean Sea**

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“ During 2022, the GEF CReW+ project has supported many countries in the Wider Caribbean Region to achieve significant progress in integrated water and wastewater management. Through OAS’ General Secretariat we have strengthened Barbados’ National Water Reuse Policy via the development of a Communications Strategy. This activity will be very impactful since it will focus on addressing behavior and changes in perception among the population. ”



Andrés Sánchez

Water Programme Specialist

Agency

Organization of American States

3. Winners of GWP–Caribbean’s Shark Tank Competition announced!

By UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat– The finals of the 2022 Global Water Partnership-Caribbean Young Caribbean Water Entrepreneurs Shark Tank competition concluded in October 2022, with a total of seven finalists pitching their projects or ideas under two categories. Keston Singh, from Trinidad and Tobago, emerged as the winner in Category two on Integrated Water and Wastewater Management, financed by the GEF CReW+ project. He delivered the winning pitch, securing US\$4,000 to advance his new project idea “Aqua Clean”. Dean Morris and Nicholas Kee from Jamaica took home the Category one prize to advance their project “Kee Farms” under the themes “Water and Agriculture, Water and Climate.”

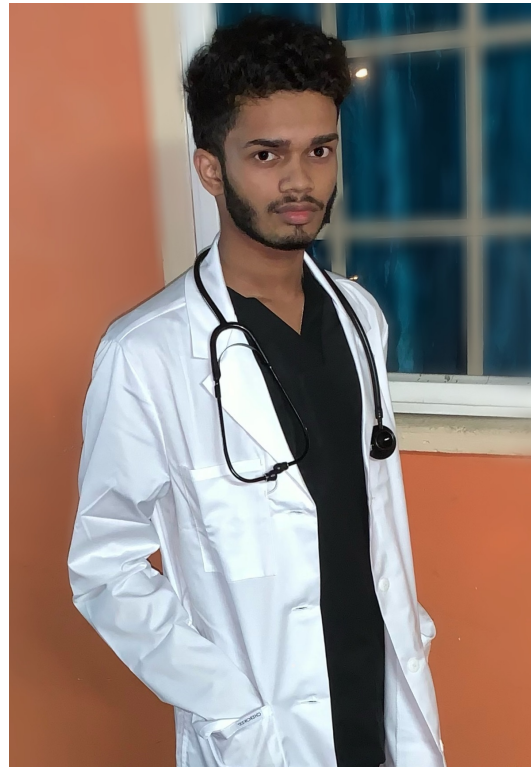


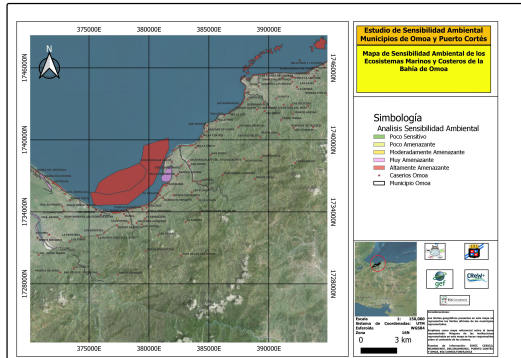
Photo caption: Keston Singh, winner of the Shark Tank Competition.

According to Keston, Aqua Clean is meant to be a portable device, that can filter and purify dirty water, whether it be water from sewers, water from flooding or wastewater into clean, potable water. The device will use a combination of methods to filter the water. He proposes that the device will be solar powered to reduce negative impacts on the climate but may also be powered by electric current gained from fossil fuels.

“Usually in Trinidad, people who are most affected by flooding are the same persons who don’t have a regular supply of water. Instead, they may receive water less than three days per week. When flooding affects said persons, a device like this would benefit them as they can filter the flood water and receive potable water as the end product,” he explained.

As the idea of Aqua Clean is rolled out further, Keston indicated that apart from his main target audience, citizens affected by flooding, he would hope to engage water utility companies and the government in the future.

Further reading: [Finalists from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago Deliver Winning Pitches in the 2022 Young Caribbean Water Entrepreneurs Shark Tank Competition - GWP.](#)



4. New Environmental Sensitivity Map of Puerto Cortes and Omoa Bay

By GIZ- The maps were elaborated by a multidisciplinary team, consisting of staff from the Secretaria de Energia, Recursos Naturales, Ambiente y Minas (MIAMBIENTE+), the municipalities of Puerto Cortes and Omoa, and

the Puerto Cortes-Omoa Bay Interinstitutional Committee During the process, the location of the main ecosystems in the region was specified, and potential risks in the face of extreme climatic events were identified. These measures were complemented by a training workshop, in which the map and background information were explained to 19 representatives from non-governmental institutions, among others.

The next steps will be to involve stakeholders and regulators in managing and updating the vulnerability map and to enable a continuous dialogue on objectives and strategies. The map will be published on the website of CESCO-SINIA (National System of Environmental Indicators) by January 2023.



World Environment Situation Room
Data, Information and Knowledge on the Environment



Global Environment Monitoring
Oceans, Seas and Coasts, Water, Air, Biodiversity,
Climate Change, Pollution, Risk

See more

5. New Regional Environmental Platform Aims to Strengthen Information Management in the Wider Caribbean

By *UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat* - The UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat, through co-financing from the GEF CReW+ project and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, has been supporting the development of a regional environmental database platform for the Wider Caribbean. The platform will support data and information management on marine pollution and marine biodiversity which will also benefit GEF CReW+ countries.

Why is this platform so important?

As data and information management can be challenging for countries, this platform aims to identify data gaps and make data more accessible for national and regional decision-making. Governments will also be able to improve their reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals, of which UNEP is the [custodian for 26 indicators spanning 6 Goals](#), including Goals 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land) that are directly linked to GEF CReW+.

This regional platform will compile information from national monitoring and assessment programmes, strengthen science-policy linkages, support regional reporting on international agreements, and the monitoring of the Secretariat's [Regional Nutrient Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan](#), and [Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021 – 2030](#).

This effort is also expected to build on the Secretariat's landmark reports on the [State of the Convention Area \(SOCAR\)](#) focusing on marine pollution data, and the State of Nearshore Marine Habitats, which were launched in 2020.

The pilot platform is being developed by the University of Geneva through the UNEP Science Division's Global Resource Information Database (GRID) network in Geneva. It is already in its final stages of creation and will be integrated into UNEP's data, information and knowledge hub on environment known as the [World Environment Situation Room](#).

6. GEF CReW+ Project develops Water Information Management System (WIMS) in six Caribbean countries

By *UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat* - The GEF CReW+ project is currently developing a Water Information Management System (WIMS) to help countries in the Caribbean with innovative water and wastewater management solutions. Costa Rica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago are the six pioneer countries to benefit from WIMS.

What is WIMS? WIMS is an easy-to-use and cost-effective web open data portal in which water-related data and information can be discovered and analysed across multiple domains and users. WIMS enables water sector

stakeholders to store, manage, find, access, and use spatial and non-spatial water-related data and information. WIMS will also enable sharing of information between national agencies to facilitate reporting on regional and global commitments, helping the six Caribbean countries to achieve SDG 6 and SDG 14.

Alongside creating a WIMS in each of the six partner countries, other activities include developing a basic Data Governance Framework that the collaborators of the WIMS can adopt. In addition, knowledge transfer will be ensured through the establishment of a community of practice and capacity trainings to analyse and manage spatial water-related data. WIMS is being developed by [United Nations University Institute for Water Environment and Health \(UNU-INWEH\)](#), a long-standing collaboration partner of UNEP.

7.75 latrines were built in La Moskitia, Honduras



8. The Dominican Republic has Incorporated Standards of Safe Wastewater Reuse Into Discharge Regulations

By GIZ - To strengthen the framework for wastewater reuse in the Dominican Republic, GEF CReW+ followed a two-pronged approach: a study analyzing the legal and regulatory framework concerning water resources and sanitation was followed by the revision of the country's discharge regulations.

The study identified the urgent need to act regarding the country's wastewater discharge regulations. It also revealed the absence of monitoring mechanisms in the agricultural, tourist, and industrial sectors. Through interviews, key

stakeholders pointed out that the regulation should be revised to incorporate sludge management and requirements for wastewater reuse.

The revision of discharge regulations was conducted through a committee of representatives from the main institutions involved in the management of water resources and sanitation in the country. The committee identified seven fields of application to be considered safe for reuse, including the irrigation of non-food crops and construction sites.

For the first time, the Dominican Republic has regulatory parameters which ensure the safe reuse of wastewater. Of equally outstanding importance is the dialogue established between the institutions. The methodology and lessons learned in the Dominican Republic can in the future be transferred to other countries with similar regulatory frameworks.

9. Barbados Implements the National Water Reuse Policy Promoting Behavioral Change

The year 2022 has been of special significance for the Water Program of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS) and its participation as Executing Agency of the GEF CRW+ Project, in particular supporting Barbados in the implementation of their national activities. One of these activities consists in the Development of a National Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan to support the implementation of Barbados' National Water Reuse Policy.

The National Water Reuse Policy was developed in 2018 as a strategic measure to face the challenge of maintaining water security in the country considering Barbados' current water scarcity conditions and probable future scenarios expected because of climate change. As the country advances in its implementation, the importance of adequately communicating the Policy was recognized. Communication plays an important role in facilitating the successful implementation of a Policy, aiming at ensuring the input and commitment of a wide range of individuals who need to be involved and informed in the process for the Policy to be effective and provide good results.

For the Development of the Communication Strategy, the GS/OAS, through a competitive process, has recruited the Barbadian firm PRMR Inc. With an excellent and committed group of experts from the Caribbean, PRMR Inc. will



Créditos Fotográficos: Samad de Imar. Pexels.

be conducting a series of activities to identify, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Department of the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, the best way forward for the Communication Strategy which is expected to materialize by mid-2023. The GS/OAS team will accompany both parties in this endeavor as it continues to support the strengthening of Integrated Water and Wastewater Management in the Caribbean, as part of the GEF CRew+ Project.

The project recognizes the leadership of the government of Barbados in promoting the implementation of public policies for promoting public participation in the Integrated Water Resources Management of the Wider Caribbean, this experience will be important for other countries of the region to follow and replicate.



10. Pre-design for a Wastewater Collection and Treatment System in La Fortuna de San Carlos Developed

By GIZ - The pre-design of the system started in May 2021. Since then, the team has been engaged in the preliminary topography, structural and treatment system predesign, and obtaining permits, among others. All

these processes have been performed in collaboration with the Water Directorate (DA) of the Ministry of Environment, the Instituto de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AyA in Spanish), the development association of La Fortuna de San Carlos, the Inter-American Development Bank, and GIZ. The project's goal is the provision of sanitation services for more than 23,000 habitants by the year 2050 in one of the most beautiful tourist places in Costa Rica.

On the 26th of August 2022, the workshop "Towards sustainability of the sanitation system in La Fortuna of San Carlos" took place, in which the results of the feasibility study for the sanitation system were presented and funding was discussed. The results of the feasibility study were presented by the consulting company Hidrogeotecnia Ltd (HGT). Additional workshops took place with interested stakeholders. Later, participants shared lessons learned from other projects and discussed the next steps. Possible sources of funding were also addressed.

The workshop was considered very useful as it enabled fruitful discussions and agreements. The main upcoming challenge for the project is to gather economic resources and to continue the stages of the final design.

By the PCG - Are you following our social media feeds? Special campaigns, jobs, events and project activities are advertised. We welcome submissions from participating countries about project-related events. Join us in our efforts to disseminate GEF CReW+! Check our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts in the footer.

 **GEF CReW+** ✓
2022-11-19



#WorldToiletDay Have you ever wondered where does excreta go after you flush? ... and what happens with it when you don't have a toilet? Sadly, some may end up on the coasts...

— with [Inter-American Development Bank](#) and [5 others](#).

Sustainable sanitation begins with a properly managed toilet.

Sanitation is a pillar
to good health and for the protection of water sources and the environment.



CReW+
Implementing solutions for integrated water and waste water management for a clean and healthy Caribbean

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GEF CReW+ is a collaborative project financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It is co-implemented by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The GEF CReW+ is being co-executed by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Organization of American States (OAS) on behalf of IADB, and by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat on behalf of UNEP in 18 countries in the Wider Caribbean Region.

GEF CReW+ Project

San Jose, Costa Rica

Inquiries
danielaara@iadb.org



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