

GREENING OF GOVERNMENT PROJECT

The Greening of Government project has as its main focus the development of a holistic framework for incorporating environmental considerations into the day-to-day operations of the public sector.

During this initial phase, it is envisaged that the project will focus on energy conservation, water conservation, solid waste minimization, materials usage, sewage, air quality, noise and odours, hazardous substances, amenities, ergonomics, health and safety, and procurement. If successful, the project will be expanded in a shared approach so that all public sector operations and infrastructure will incorporate these issues in their daily activities.

The Project was officially launched in April 2003, and came about as a result of initiatives taking place in the private sector, in particular the tourism sector, with many hotels seeking and achieving Green Globe certification. At the international level, the ISO 14000 series has set the bar for sound environmental operations.

Following the launch of the project 45 participants from within the Public Sector completed a week-long environmental audit training course, which culminated in audits of three Government buildings. The recommendations of the audit reports were intended to guide management and staff in their efforts toward a “green” office.

As part of the Project, “green teams” were formed at the three audit sites. Team members completed training in conducting environmental audits planned activities aimed at sensitizing all staff to environmental issues, particularly environmentally sound office practices. As a consequence the green team of the Ministry of the Environment has conducted four seminars including seminars on fire and food safety, and disaster preparedness. The first seminar focused on a study of the practical incorporation of green practices at the Casuarina Beach Hotel.

Its main objectives are:

- To demonstrate the benefits of a green approach to operations of government;
- To set an example for the private sector on the benefits of a green business approach;
- To demonstrate the economic and social viability of green approaches to the government;
- To enhance the government's image as a proactive stakeholder and a leader with respect to environmental management and protection.



Photo: File Photo of the Green Team at the Ministry of the Environment and Energy.

To oversee the project a multi-sectoral Steering Committee has been assembled comprising of representatives from 12 public sector agencies.

It is recognised that “Greening” responsibilities have existed within various agencies prior to the launch of this initiative. Greening of Government therefore provides focus; consolidation and commitment of the agencies to helping Barbados achieve a higher level of productivity and efficiency in resource usage starting with its Civil Service.

Submitted by The Ministry of the Environment and Energy.