



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE , LANDS, FISHERIES AND COOPERATIVES

Phone: (473) 440-2708/3386/3078 ext. 26831, Fax: (473) 440-4191, E: prunit@moa.gov.gd

BOOST TO SARGASSUM MANAGEMENT EFFORTS WITH JAPANESE DONATED BOATS

ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA, SEPT. 20, 2023 – The fisheries division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries, and Cooperatives has received a valuable asset in the fight against Grenada's persistent sargassum problem, which has plagued the island since 2011. This critical addition comes in the form of a state-of-the-art, over 20-foot boat, along with essential material, equipment, and spare parts.

This substantial contribution was made possible through the generous support of the Government and People of Japan as part of the Japan Grant Aid for the Economic and Social Development Programme for Grenada (FY2020).

The official launch ceremony of this game-changing resource recently took place at the Kirani James Boulevard, marking a significant milestone in Grenada's efforts to address the long-standing sargassum issue.

The \$2.3 million project aims to manage the sargassum problem effectively, ensuring the sustainability of Grenada's marine ecosystems and the livelihood of its coastal communities.

Chief Fisheries Officer and Technical Expert, Justin Rennie, underscored the profound significance of this initiative, stating, "The project's benefits extend beyond fisheries, as they will significantly aid the local community and tourism sector. It would be very beneficial for our fisherfolk because when the sargassum is within our shores, the fishermen cannot go out to sea, resulting in severe operational costs and lost fishing years."

To guarantee the success of this initiative, a comprehensive training session was organised for the staff of the Fisheries Division, Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority, local fishers, boat operators, and marine mechanics immediately following the launch. The training aimed to demonstrate best practices in the operation and maintenance of the equipment, and to provide practical guidance on effectively addressing the sargassum challenge.

The project also received support from Japanese experts from YANMAR and Nitto Seimo Co. Ltd, who are implementing it on behalf of Japan International Cooperating Systems (JICS). These

experts played a vital role in training the Grenadian teams on the operation of the newly acquired equipment.

“By boat we will be towing the fishing gear made by polyethylene net, to collect the sargassum, put the sargassum on the boat and then we collect and check what the sargassum is actually doing, “explained Michitaka Nakamura, General Manager in the Overseas Business Department at Nitto Seimo Co. Ltd.

Expanding on the collaborative endeavours, the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority plays a pivotal role in managing the land-based aspects of the project. It will acquire dump trucks and various vehicles, intended for the storage of sargassum at a designated location in Telescope, St. Andrew.

Additionally, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) is actively exploring ways to harness the potential of sargassum. This exploration encompasses its use in fertilisers and various commercial products, with extensive cooperation established with regional and international universities and research laboratories.

There will be coordination among various government departments and agencies for the establishment of a committee to ensure effective organisation in the removal and maintenance of the sargassum.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries, and Cooperatives expresses its heartfelt gratitude to the Government and People of Japan for their invaluable contribution to Grenada's ongoing efforts to combat the sargassum problem and promote sustainable fisheries.

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Fisheries and Cooperatives...*ensuring food and nutrition security for all.*