



**Invasive Plant Management in  
Saint Lucia and in  
Collaboration with Caribbean Neighbours**

**Ulrike Krauss & Virginie Sealys**  
Forestry Department  
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF)  
Union

International Symposium  
"Conservation de la flore menacée de l'Outre-Mer français"  
La Réunion, 13-17 December, 2010

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### Saint Lucia and its Caribbean Neighbours



Population : approx. 170,000  
Capital: Castries  
Area: 616 km<sup>2</sup>  
Forest cover: 35%  
Govt. Forest Reserve: 9,200 ha

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### What are Invasive Alien Species (IAS)?

*IAS are plants, animals or micro-organisms that are not native to a specific ecosystem and whose introduction threatens biodiversity, food security, health or economic development.*

*IAS are the second most important threat to global biodiversity (second to habitat destruction)*

*The global cost of IAS is estimated at US\$1.4 trillion per year (nearly 5% GDP) – and rising in times of globalization and climate change*




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## “Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean”

**Donor:** Global Environment Facility (GEF)

**Start:** October 2009, duration 4 years

**Goal**

Conserve globally important ecosystems, the species and genetic diversity within the insular Caribbean

**Objective**

Mitigate the threat to local biodiversity and economy by IAS in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems




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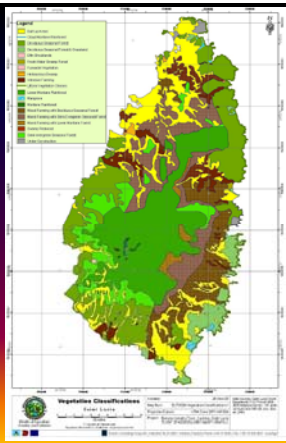
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### Project Components

- C1: Develop a National Invasive Species Strategy (NISS)
- C2: Establish a regional, Caribbean cooperation and strategy (CIAS)
- C3: Knowledge management and sharing
- C4: Prevention of new IAS Introductions in Terrestrial, Freshwater and Marine Systems
- C5: Early Detection, Rapid Response and Control of IAS Impacts




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### Development of NISS in Saint Lucia

- Broad-based National IAS Working Group composed of several Ministries, local and international NGOs, intergovernmental agencies and the private sector
- Baseline analysis presented IAS presence, distribution, public awareness, management practices, legislation and policy
- 122 IAS recorded, 54 are plants, of which
  - 43 are terrestrial and
  - 11 aquatic
- Aliens introduced some generations ago often falsely viewed as native
  - Banana
  - Citrus
  - Mango
  - Water hyacinth




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### Regional, Caribbean-wide Cooperation and Invasive Alien Species Strategy (CIAS)

- CIAS uses ecosystem approach (terrestrial, marine, freshwater)
- Participate in relevant regional and global IAS fora, e.g. CISWG, GLISPA, TNC Fire & Invasive Plants Learning Network, UNEP CEP, etc.
- Saint Lucia to lead cooperation in OECS, French-speaking Eastern Caribbean.
- Soon also lesson-sharing with Creole-speaking DOM-TOM and SIDs?



CIAS: Caribbean Invasive Alien Species Strategy  
 CIASNET: Caribbean Invasive Alien Species Network  
 CIASNET is a web-based platform for sharing information and resources on invasive alien species management in the Caribbean region.

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### Knowledge Management and Sharing

<http://www.saintlucianplants.com>



<http://www.ciasnet.org>

Carib\_IAS\_Threat@YahooGroups.com

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### IAS Plant Prevention Priorities for Saint Lucia



*Miconia calvescens*



*Psidium cattleianum*

- Prevention is better than cure!
- Deliberately introduced ornamentals represent largest risk
- Management by
  - Public awareness-raising
  - Import restrictions
 (pest risk analysis-linked permit system)

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### Plants Already Invasive in Saint Lucia



*Hedychium coronarium*  
Lavann, Lavender



*Nephrolepis brownii*  
Asian sword fern



*Tradescantia zebrina*



*Cymbopogon citratus*  
Sitonnèl,  
Lemon grass  
Fire risk at  
National  
Landmark

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### Plants Already Invasive in Saint Lucia



*Coccinia grandis*



*Spathodea campanulata*



*Halophila stipulacea*



*Eichhornia crassipes*

- Invasiveness often related to habitat disturbance rather than behaviour elsewhere
- Vulnerable sites require additional precaution

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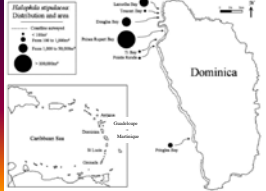

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### Research Thesis from Dominica Alerted us to Incipient Seagrass Invasion



The distribution and expansion of the invasive seagrass *Halophila stipulacea* in Dominica, West Indies, with a preliminary report from St. Lucia  
Demian A. Willette<sup>1\*</sup>, Richard F. Ambrose<sup>1,2</sup>

- Detected in 3 of 6 bays surveys
- Spread by boats and motorized watersport
- May affect native *Halophila decipens*

Marigot Bay, Saint Lucia

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### Community-driven Ivy Gourd Management

- Technical expertise and finance from Forestry Department
- Awareness-raising in secondary school and health centre (Public Health and Community Development Officers)
- Participatory, community-driven eradication creates sense of ownership



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### Invasive Species – relax if you can !

## Thank you !



- Fédération des Conservatoires Botaniques Nationaux (FCBN) for invitation and funding
- Photos from Roger's Graveson's "*Plants of Saint Lucia*" and Demian Willette
- GEF, Government of Saint Lucia, and project collaborators



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