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## **Major Coastal Stabilization Project Launched in Saint Lucia**

By: SLNT Communication & Advocacy Officer

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*(L-R): At the head table -Valerie Leon, Dr. Anderson Reynolds, Dr. Ulrike Krauss & Bishnu Tulsie*

Increased wave actions, intensified storms, receding coastlines and disappearing beaches have made it difficult for even the biggest critic to ignore the impacts of climate change on Small Island Developing States like Saint Lucia. According to the Saint Lucia National Trust's (SLNT) Director, Mr. Bishnu Tulsie, a few years after the development of the causeway to join Pigeon Island to the mainland in the 1970s the coastline receded some 20 meters. Therefore, with the help of the Department of Economic Planning a study was commissioned in 2009 and a few

measures implemented over the years to arrest this issue. Seven years later a major project entitled "Increasing the resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards, and reducing the rate of coastal erosion for Pigeon Island National Landmark (PINL) and Pointe Sable Environmental Protection Area (PSEPA) through Beach Stabilisation, Restoration & Enhancement" has been launched. The project is financed by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC or 5Cs) in partnership with the German Development Bank (KfW) under the Local Adaptation Measures (LAMs) Grant Scheme.

Also addressing the launch on February 17<sup>th</sup> was Dr. Ulrike Krauss, National Coordinator for the Implementation Consultant, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Dr. Krauss stated that this was a regional project involving Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Jamaica and that Saint Lucia was participating with two projects at four intervention sites. She said, "PSEPA is important to the ecology of the island and I'm glad to see some of the tour guides, restaurateurs, hoteliers, private sector service providers here as

this area provides many eco-tourism opportunities, which support many livelihoods based on the natural beauty of the area.”

The Southern Tourism Development Corporation (STDC) is the main project partner that will be working with the Trust to execute the project in the south of the island. The Corporation’s Chairman, Dr. Anderson Reynolds also addressed the opening ceremony, noting that like the PINL, the PSEPA is worthy of the National Landmark status, considering the alluring landscape and seascape which include Moule-a-Chique, Maria Islands and the bluish green waters of the Atlantic.

The Trust is thankful to the then Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and



*Site Visit in Vieux Fort with Maria Islands in the background.*

Technology for bringing the 5Cs Project to its attention and for supporting the submission of the project proposal. Ms. Valerie Leon, Acting Permanent Secretary in the Department of Sustainable Development commended the SLNT and STDC for coming forward as true stewards of the environment. She reminded the audience that while government has a

responsibility to create an enabling environment and mobilize resources, citizens must take responsibility of managing resources on which their livelihoods depend.

The project launch, which was held at the Trust’s southern office located at the Maria Islands Interpretation Center, was preceded by a stakeholders’ meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> at the PINL. Both activities, which included site visits within PINL and PSEPA, gave stakeholders an opportunity to learn more about the project and its implementation plan.