



LAGON BLEU

Newsletter September 2013

"Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man." – Stewart Updall

Introducing: Our New Team



The new Project Managers are Dirk-jan Smelt and Rosan Koops. They are studying Facility Management at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, The Netherlands. Rosan and Dirk-jan will be running the project until the end of January 2014.

Estelle Deja is part of our team being in charge of coordinating the Eco Guide Programme, improving the Eco Volunteer Programme and developing new scientific projects related to the coastal environment of

Blue Bay Marine Park. She completed a master degree in Protected Areas Management at James Cook University, Australia. For six months, she worked for a NGO in the Dutch Caribbean as National Park Ranger/Education officer assistant where she also achieved a local community-based project.

Joseph Heard is Lagoon Monitoring Project Manager until March 2014. He is studying Wildlife Conservation at Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom and he has also gained experience assisting in research in the Blue Bay area since 2012.

The Lagoon Monitoring Project Volunteer is Alicia Meadows, who is studying Animal Science at Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom. She is also assisting in the development of the Eco Guide for Lagon Bleu. She will be leaving at the end of September.

Lagon Bleu: T-shirts and polo's

From now on, Lagon Bleu sells its own T-shirts and polo's! We operate with minimal overheads, so by buying a shirt you are directly contributing to preserving our precious lagoons. On our website, you will find the 'Become a Member' button. For a minimum donation of Rs. 500, you get a free T-shirt! If you would like to have more information about our T-shirts, you can always contact our office.



Recent activities: [Lagoon Monitoring](#)



Our Lagoon Monitoring Program will be in full swing again from next month with regular fish, coral and anthropogenic activity surveys being conducted. We aim to be out on the water most days collecting the valuable data required to try and understand what is happening in the lagoon. This will allow us to inform the local community on the state of their most precious resource, upon which many of them heavily depend.

Recent activities: Education Programme

Two Eco-Sud members visited the Mahebourg Espoir Education Centre (MEEC) in Mahebourg on Thursday 19 September. A presentation on the marine environment was shown to the schoolchildren, with the main aim to sensitise them. The children showed their interest in the marine environment and they seemed to be aware of today's ecological issues.

Upcoming activities: Eco Guide Programme

Thanks to the cooperation with Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA), Lagon Bleu set up an Eco Guide Programme designed to provide all stakeholders with information about the Mauritius Marine Environment.

During the Eco Guide Programme the participants will learn about all the different aspects of marine life. The participants will gain both theoretical and practical experiences.

The Eco Guide Programme has benefits for the environment, participants, hotels and tourists. After taking the course, the Eco Guides will get a recognised Industry Qualification, which could provide better job opportunities. An opportunity for tourism is to offer guide-based products as best practice of Eco Tourism. As a consequence, the Eco Guides will enrich the experiences of tourists and visitors and increase their awareness of the surrounding environment. This in turn could reduce the impact of tourism on natural and cultural resources.

On the 17th of October, the Eco Guide Programme will start. Five people are already enrolled. For more information about the Eco Guide Programme, contact our office.

Upcoming activities: Mangrove Cleaning

On the 27th of October, one of our new projects 'Mangrove Cleaning' will start. Mangroves protect land against flooding and help to prevent shoreline erosion. Since coral reefs thrive in nutrient-poor waters and mangroves thrive in nutrient-poor waters, mangroves also improve the water quality by purifying the water from wastes and pollutants.

Before entering Mahebourg, there are mangroves on both sides of the road. Waste is being dumped in the mangroves forest. Mangroves breathe using their roots. If the roots are covered in plastic, mangroves are not able to breathe anymore. This will also have effects on the coral reefs. To maintain the function of the mangroves, it is important to keep it clean. As it is a touristic area, it will also improve the aesthetic value of the recreational environment of Mauritius.

We will be very grateful if you could come and help us. To ensure positive outcomes of the project, we need a lot of people! We will keep you updated about this event via Facebook.

Lagon Bleu

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