

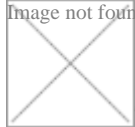
LUCELEC Staff Help Restore Forest Cover In Belle Vue

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Submitted by cjoseph on Thu, 2018-04-19 09:11

Castries, April 19, 2018 – Twenty St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) volunteers (along with some children, family and friends) recently turned out for the tree planting trek to the Belle Vue, Vieux-Fort water catchment area. Despite the early start to the day and the challenges in navigating the hilly and muddy terrain, the volunteers were up for the challenge. They were joined by staff from the Forestry Department who, for the past four years have worked to return forest cover to the area.

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The Vieux-Fort water catchment area used to be prized agricultural land, a working banana plantation.

It had been damaged by successive storms and was just starting to recover. The LUCELEC volunteers were building on the efforts of visiting sailors (from the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers) who, during annual stops to the islands have worked to restore tree cover there.

The LUCELEC crew planted mostly Bwa-Den and Blue Maho trees in an area below the existing Belle Vue Dam and above the proposed dam. LUCELEC Credit Control Clerk Sherry Etienne is a two-time tree planting volunteer. Her belief in the cause motivated her to stay the course despite the day's physical challenges, the steep and sometimes sheer slopes and her fear of heights. "Based on the volume of paper I use at the office daily, I felt compelled to come plant some trees," she says.

The "forest restoration" drive is part of a movement to re-plant lost trees. The campaign is designed to generate not only forest quantity and quality, but improved air and water quality and climate change resilience.

LUCELEC's support for tree planting initiatives is part of the Company's environmental stewardship programme. The programme includes the use of shielded conductors in wooded areas to minimize tree trimming, harvesting rain water for use at its Cul De Sac facility, recycling used oil so it can be repurposed by commercial entities, the introduction of utility-scale renewable energy, and supporting education and training programmes in the management of the environment.

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