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St Lucia's lone power company – LUCELEC - has once again thrown its support behind a St Lucia National Trust initiative to promote sustainable environmental practices among the nation's youth.

LUCELEC donated fifteen thousand dollars towards the National Trust's annual Youth Environment Forum (YEF) during a recent press launch for this year's programme, making the company the biggest corporate supporter of the initiative.

YEF aims to empower young St Lucians to be advocates for the environment and heritage conservation. Its target is to engage approximately 100 students from throughout the country to join the fight against environmental degradation.

Speaking at the press launch, LUCELEC Corporate Communications Manager, Roger Joseph stated that LUCELEC has made a 3-year commitment to provide fifteen thousand dollars annually towards the initiative.

"We see this as helping to encourage young minds to think about sustainability; to think about respect and appreciation for the environment," he said.

The Youth Environment Forum is one of many ways through which LUCELEC demonstrates its commitment to environmental protection in St Lucia.

The power company has taken a number of steps to monitor and minimize its carbon footprint, including the use of emission monitoring equipment to ensure that emissions from its Cul de Sac power station remain within acceptable international limits.

"It's not often that a power company is associated with the green economy or environmental preservation. But at LUCELEC what we've been doing since we began operations is actually balancing the country's economic and social needs for power with minimizing our negative impacts on the environment. And we've been doing so in various ways," Mr. Joseph added.

He cited the use of insulated conductors in heavily wooded areas to minimise the need for tree trimming, replacing 3 and 2-pole structures for its 66kV transmission lines with single pole structures to reduce tree cutting and the land space required, and seeking to develop an Environmental Management System that can be ISO 14001 certified, as examples of initiatives being pursued by the company.

St Lucia National Trust Communications and Advocacy Officer, Karetta Crooks-Charles says the increased sponsorship has allowed the Trust to prepare a more robust programme to engage the participants in the Youth Environment Forum.

YEF is scheduled for July 23 – 26 at the Castries Comprehensive and Vieux Fort Comprehensive Secondary schools. The closing ceremony will take place at the Pigeon Island national landmark on Friday July, 27.

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