



Communication request

International scientific workshop

« *Biodiversity of forest and volcanic habitats of Martinique: from specificities to exceptionality* »

Martinique Regional Council has since 2012 initiated the first steps towards the nomination of its exceptional biodiversity in UNESCO's world heritage list. In this context, a scientific workshop will take place in Martinique from 12 to 14 October 2015, in order to:

1. Validate the choice of UNESCO classification criteria, identify the area's attributes and define its state of conservation in order to prepare the next step which is the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)
2. Draw up an inventory of knowledge, identify gaps and/or needs in this area, and replace Martinique in its regional archipelago context in order to bring out its uniqueness as well as the links that characterize and condition the ecological and volcanic continuum of the Caribbean.
3. Discuss the opportunity to implement a regional cooperation workshop in the areas of research and protection: What is the status of the Caribbean cooperation regarding this field? On what basis and how to consider this cooperation? What criteria and values should be compared in a Caribbean level, and overall?

The forest and volcanic areas of Martinique proposed for classification in World Heritage list (Montagne Pelée and Pitons du Carbet, the southwestern peninsula and the Rocher du Diamant sites, and the Caravelle peninsula) are, for the first, the only area of the Eastern Caribbean archipelago harboring between 0 and 1397 meters high and 1200-6000 mm annual rainfall, with all types of the Caribbean's vegetation, included in a genuine functional continuum and in a good state of conservation; for the second, the broader continuum still largely preserved in the xero-mesophilic tropical forest of the Eastern Caribbean, represented in all the diversity of its bio-climatic and forest subtypes; the third, an area benefiting one of the highest levels of national protection and constituting a remarkable area of homogeneous dry forest.

Because of their singular geodynamic context, these three sites harbor a wide biodiversity, especially Martinican and Caribbean endemic species.

Despite the great faunistic and floristic worth of these sites, highlighted through numerous scientific publications, reports, and other field surveys, there is still a need to refine their understanding and more generally to perform a real inventory, in order to bring out similarities or differences with the other Caribbean islands.

The actual pressures, threats, and more generally human impacts experienced by these natural areas since the beginning of human occupation, especially since the beginning of colonization, will be highlighted from this diagnosis. Again, comparisons with neighboring

islands are necessary in order to bring out a typology of pressures, or identify specific pressures in a given territory.

This workshop will be divided into two time lapses:

- Two days of presentations of 20 minutes maximum each, followed by dialogue sessions (12 and 13 October 2015)
- One day of field visits (October 14, 2015)

The expected contributions should address the following topics (not exhaustive):

- Geology (Volcanology)
- Botany
- Ecology
- Ornithology
- Other vertebrates
- Invertebrates (including entomology)
- Analysis of the links and factors that unite this biodiversity and have allowed its maintenance.
- Classification methodology in UNESCO World Heritage list

These contributions are expected before Friday, September 25, 2015 by mail to the following address: colloque.martinique.unesco@gmail.com

Contacts :

Parc Naturel Régional de la Martinique, Direction de la Protection et de l'aménagement du territoire : +596.596.64.56.43

DEAL : +596.596.59.57.00