



ISLANDAID SIERRA LEONE

CELEBRATES ISLAND BIODIVERSITY DAY ON 22ND MAY 2017

Islands are one of the precious gems of a nation, which ecosystem and biodiversity habitations need to be conserved and protected against the growing risk of climate change, environmental disaster and harsh human conditions. It is evident that the islands located along the coastal areas of the Ramsar sites of the Sierra Leone estuary (Rokel and Bankasoka Rivers), Atlantic Ocean, Scarcise Rivers and south-eastern region are acutely vulnerable to ecological, environmental, social and economic threats, which need to be provided with proactive remedial and innovative actions and solutions.



IslandAid Sierra Leone, as a community based organisation promotes island Conservation Biodiversity, Sustainable Livelihood and Tourism Development. It collaborates with Planning Green Futures Charitable/Baobab Trust, UK to make islands environmentally health against biodiversity loss and ecosystem habitat destruction for sustainable tourism development.

Islands have unique features and rich nature, a treasure trove for biodiversity; as the bell weather for international environmental policies.

This global event, Island Biodiversity Day is usually celebrated by our organisation, IslandAid Sierra Leone, with no support from the government through the line MDAs. It is hugely supported by friends of islands and founder of Island Aid; and island community stakeholders.

However, notwithstanding the inherent challenges fraught with, this global event has to be celebrated with the traditional island community participation.

It shall escalate the extent of Islands' Vulnerability and the innovative actions and solutions to be taken in order to have a healthy environment that can protect conservation biodiversity and ecosystem habitat destruction. This will be done in line with this year's CBD's theme: ***Biodiversity and Tourism Development.***

To celebrate this year's occasion, the following events have been slated to be undertaken:

- Community education and sensitization
- Stakeholders consultative dialogue to harmonise the link between environmental health, biodiversity protection and tourism development
- Radio and television programme on the theme Biodiversity and Tourism development
- Island Newsletter "**Island Mirror**" Launch
- Island mix and beach fiesta to promote island ecotourism development



In line with the strategic policy objectives of Pillar- one of the Agenda for Prosperity, which focuses on sustainable ecotourism development in the tourism industry, IslandAid Sierra Leone and Planning Green Futures Charitable Trust, UK with support from Baobab Trust, UK have embarked or engaged in Island ecotourism development project on Tasso Island, which in the long run would be extended to the other islands (Bonthé, Tiwai, Turtle, Plantain and the Ramsar Sites), as the drivers for sustainable tourism development.



One of the chalets on the Tasso Ecotourism camp

In promoting sustainable environmental management and biodiversity protection in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the keys issues of (Aichi Biodiversity Targets), will be escalated to promote sustainable tourism development.



The boats to transport tourist to the various destination location

To promote ecotourism development on the islands, IslandAid Sierra Leone and Planning Green Futures, UK with support from Baobab Trust UK, have built an ecotourism camp on Tasso Island under the Tasso Ecotourism Project in line with Pillar one of the Agenda for Prosperity

This is a new tourist destination location that is endowed with the richness of nature and receptive hospitality.

In conclusion, IslandAid Sierra Leone has the human resource capacity in varied professional and academic disciplines to addressing Island conservation Biodiversity and environmental management; and Island sustainable livelihood and development but is devoid of the financing capacity and support to cushion its projected activity outlays.

In this regard, we are therefore imploring on political leaders, international development agencies, NGOs, Corporate coalitions, private sector and community stakeholders to support this novel initiative of our organisation.

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22 MAY 2017
INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism