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Eco-Youth Ventures Project Launched in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The Eco-Youth Ventures Project was officially launched today at the La Vue Conference Room, marking a significant step toward empowering young people to become environmental leaders and innovators in sustainable tourism through STEM education.

The regional initiative, implemented by the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) in partnership with the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), brings together stakeholders from the education, tourism, and sustainability sectors across St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, and St. Kitts and Nevis.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines alone, the project is expected to engage approximately 1,500 students and train 75 educators, partnering with 11 secondary schools.

Delivering remarks, Chief Education Officer Kay Martin-Jack, described the launch as more than the start of a project, calling it “an affirmation of our belief that youth are not just beneficiaries of development, but drivers of it.”

She noted that the initiative aligns closely with national priorities for holistic education, skills development, and youth empowerment, and praised the program for blending environmental stewardship, entrepreneurship, leadership, and community engagement.

Senator and Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training, Innovation, Digital Transformation and Information, Hon. Lavern King, highlighted the importance of innovation and resilience for small island developing states. She commended the collaborative effort behind EcoYouth Ventures and reaffirmed the

Government's commitment to creating an enabling environment for youth-led ideas to grow, scale, and generate impact.

In her keynote address, Her Excellency Fiona Fan, Ambassador of the Republic of China (Taiwan) to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, underscored Taiwan's longstanding partnership with PADF and the Caribbean.

Ambassador Fan emphasized the role of connectivity, innovation, and human capital development in national progress and announced that the Taiwan Scholarship Programme will open in February 2026, offering 100 scholarships for students to pursue studies in Taiwan.

Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Sustainable Development, Dr. Hon. Kishore Shallow, described the initiative as a reflection of the belief that environmental stewardship and economic opportunity are complementary.

The Minister stressed that empowering youth is essential in safeguarding the country's future and pledged the Government's continued support for initiatives that prepare young people to lead in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, green entrepreneurship, and eco-tourism.

The project presentation was delivered by PADF Education and Stakeholder Outreach Coordinator, Kimeisha Bailey, who outlined EcoYouth Ventures as a two-year program targeting youth aged 14–16 and educators across three countries.

Bailey highlighted the program's focus on closing skills gaps, fostering innovation, and building regional resilience through project-based STEM learning tied to real-world environmental and tourism challenges.

The EcoYouth Ventures Project aims to equip Caribbean youth with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to design sustainable solutions for the tourism sector while fostering collaboration among governments, educators, and the private sector.

The event was also attended by other members of Cabinet including Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Transformation Hon. Israel Bruce and Minister of Fisheries, Marine and Land Conservation and Climate Resilience Hon. Conroy Huggins

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