



## The Buzz

Newsletter of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network  
Trinidad and Tobago (BES-Net TT) project

October 2023

Issue #8

### Inside this issue

<a href="#">Outreach activities in Quarter 3</a>	2
<a href="#">Feedback to farmers</a>	3
<a href="#">Theory of change – A pollinator strategy</a>	4
<a href="#">BES-Net Trialogue in Vietnam</a>	6

**The Buzz** is the quarterly produced newsletter of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network Trinidad and Tobago project (BES-Net TT).

This newsletter reports on progress made in the implementation of the BES-Net TT project over the period, 2021-2023.

**The Buzz** is produced by the BES-Net TT Project Management Unit.

## Welcome back

Dear readers of **The Buzz** newsletter, we have a great issue lined up for you, with updates on our activities during the period August – October 2023. Read about our recent outreach activities, a feedback session with some farmers who were involved in our bee survey, and the Theory of Change workshop which took place in September. There is also a brief article on the Trialogue session of the BES Solution Fund which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

As we approach the conclusion of the BES-Net TT project, keep reading **The Buzz** and stay in tune with the implementation and outcomes of the BES-Net TT project!

A Theory of Change to support the development of a National Pollinator Strategy—read more on pages 4-5 in this issue of **The Buzz** newsletter!



Participants in Theory of Change workshop. Photo credit: Vasanti Maharaj



## Outreach activities in Quarter 3

During the period August to October 2023, the BES-Net TT project team received and responded to outreach requests from various organisations and when possible took the opportunity to share information about the project's objectives and results. Here are reports on three such events.

### DEBRA MORRISON BRIGHT MINDS FOUNDATION CHILDREN'S CAMP, 12 JULY 2023

The BES-Net TT team shared educational activities with thirty-six (36) children who were attending a vacation camp hosted by the Debra Morrison Bright Minds Foundation. The camp was held at the Mt. St. George Community Centre, Tobago. Specially selected activities helped children to learn about the variety of pollinators including a "Pollinator Bingo", a story about pollinators, puzzles and colouring activities.



### CATHOLIC YOUTH COMMISSION WORLD YOUTH DAY VILLAGE, 22 JULY 2023

Catholic youth delegates from various parts of Trinidad and Tobago took part in a World Youth Day Village in Couva, to prepare for their participation in the World Youth Day Forum in Portugal. The BES-Net TT team mounted an information booth at which

delegates learned about the bee survey and viewed some of the specimens found in the survey. Bookmarks giving tips on setting up pollinator gardens were distributed and cards advising on the use of iNaturalist to build a local pollinator and pest database.



### ECOSYSTEM APPROACH MANGROVE FESTIVAL, 05 AUGUST 2023

The Ecosystem Approach Limited organised a community event in Felicity to observe the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem. The BES-Net TT team mounted an information booth and Dr. Dempewolf delivered a short presentation on pollinators and the work being done through the project to conserve them.



## Feedback to farmers

*Some persons who are farming on the outskirts of the Matura National Park Environmentally Sensitive Area and the Main Ridge Forest Reserve assisted in the BES-Net TT bee survey. The survey was conducted by members of the Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club (TTFNC) through the support of the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme. After preliminary identification of bees was done, a feedback session was held with farmers from the Matura area to update them on the results.*

On 26th July 2023, farmers from the Matura region gathered at the Matura Government Primary School for a feedback session with the BES-Net TT team. The team was eager to share preliminary results of the bee survey which had taken place on farms in this district and also to provide an introduction to stingless bees.

Sixteen farmers participated in the session and were addressed by Ms Celeste Chariandy of BES-Net TT, who reiterated the context of the survey under the science component of the project. Dr. Linton Arneaud from the TTFNC, the main coordinator of the field survey delivered remarks.



Photo credit: Celeste Chariandy

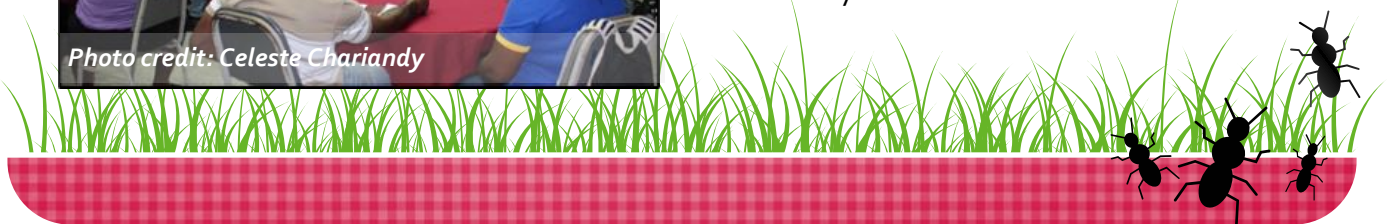
Dr. Lena Dempewolf shared information on recent identifications of the bee samples, which were sent to the Packer Lab at York University, Canada. Some of the farmers were happy to learn that new records of bee species to Trinidad were found at their farms.

Mr. David Rostant then introduced the topic of stingless bees and shared from his experience in managing these bees. There was much discussion among the attendees and they posed questions about hive acquisition and management.. There was also a suggestion to repeat the presentation in the community of Grande Riviere.



Photo credit: Celeste Chariandy

Mr. Shane Ballah, BES-Net TT Project Manager outlined next steps in the project noting that information will be shared with farmers by the development of a manual on conducting the bee survey. Sincere thanks was extended to farmers for allowing the conduct of the survey on their farms, and to Ms Abigail Bobb for her assistance in communication and outreach to farmers and for arranging use of the Primary School for the feedback session.



## Theory of change: A pollinator strategy

*Outcome 2 of the BES-Net TT workplan speaks to improving the conservation of pollinators and pollination services through improved plans and policies and a key output refers to conducting legislative review and the drafting of pollinator conservation legislation. In view of these specific plans, the BES-Net TT team took up an opportunity to host a "Theory of Change" workshop with the assistance of Promote Pollinators, the Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators and Naturalis Biodiversity Center. The workshop brought stakeholders together to develop a theory of change for pollinator conservation which can contribute to the crafting of a National Pollinator Strategy. This article provides insight on the conduct of the workshop and its output.*

For at least fourteen (14) of the twenty-six (26) participants who took part in September's Theory of Change workshop, the concept was a new one. Over the course of the three days, however, all attendees gained new knowledge of the process and value of this logic model and the steps involved in its development. The team of Martijn Thijssen from Promote Pollinators, Coalition of the Willing and Koos Biesmeijer and Marten Schoonman from Naturalis Biodiversity Centre effectively facilitated the workshop. They steadily guided participants to reflect and brainstorm on key outputs of relevant activities conducted in a coordinated fashion by key actors working together for the ultimate impact of pollinator conservation.



*Photo credit: Celeste Chariandy*

*Martijn Thijssen from Promote Pollinators at the start of the Theory of Change workshop.*

On the first day the theory of the Theory of Change was explained giving an overview of the process. Using feedback received from a pre-workshop survey, the plenary was able to reflect on participants' "dream" for pollinator management in Trinidad and Tobago, and then consider which were key factors that may impact (positively and negatively) on these dreams. Five categories of key factors were identified. After discussion, the plenary broke into smaller groups to craft an impact statement that was representative of the main dream, and then came together to look at the statements, voting and refining a single statement from the workshop.

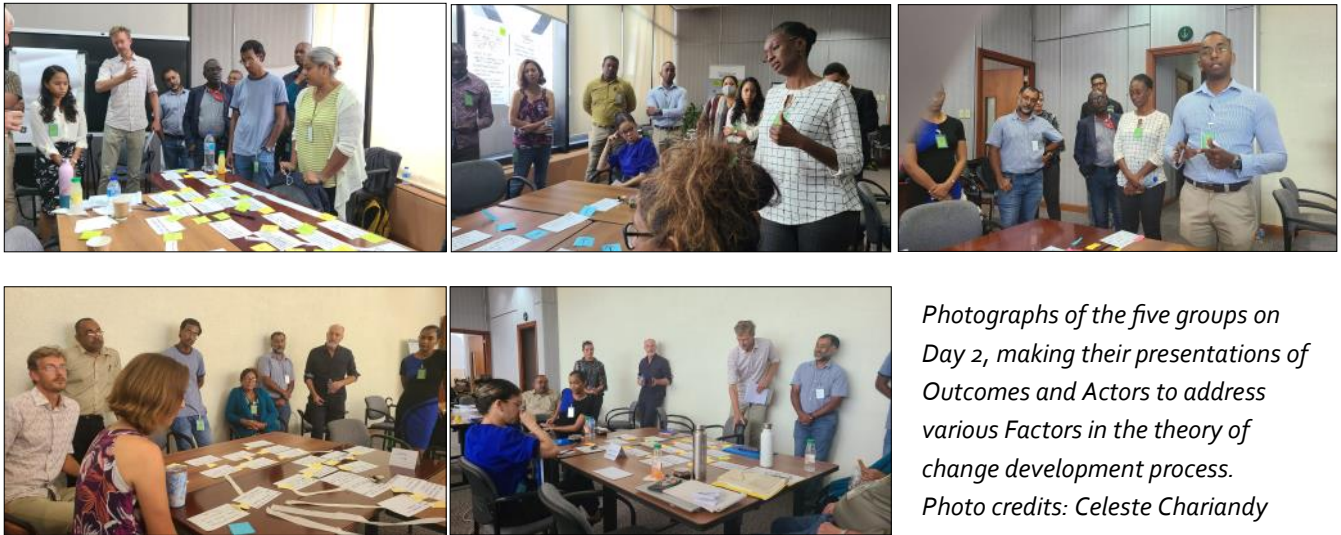


*Photo credit: Celeste Chariandy*

*Participants posting key actors and factors that impact the main "dream" for pollinator conservation.*

On the second day, the group examined the five factors that were defined on the previous day and participants re-organised themselves into groups according to the key factor to which they were most aligned.

The groups each used the main impact statement and defined outcomes aligned to that statement that are critical to be achieved when addressing that specific factor. This was a very drawn out exercise as the participants needed to be clear on the differences between outcomes and the activities and actors that are critical to achievement of the outcomes. This meant considering inherent assumptions and also ensuring that 'cause and effect' were clearly considered. Each group presented on its work to the plenary and then received and gave constructive feedback.



*Photographs of the five groups on Day 2, making their presentations of Outcomes and Actors to address various Factors in the theory of change development process. Photo credits: Celeste Chariandy*

The first two days of the workshop took place at the Conference Room, Eric Williams Financial Complex, Port of Spain, and the third and final day, the venue was Wa Samaki Ecosystems Limited at Freeport. To start the day, participants enjoyed a guided tour led by Erle Rahaman-Noronha in which he explained the philosophy of the estate built on a permaculture platform. The tour also included a visit to the pollinator garden which was set up as part of the BES-Net TT workshop series in 2022.

After the tour, participants returned to their five groups to define the activities which lead to the desired outcomes. This included clarifications based on previous feedback.

When this was concluded, groups gave second presentations of their updated flowcharts. Each presentation was physically laid out alongside the others, until at the end of all presentations, the huge output from all groups was revealed.

At the end of the workshop all participants and facilitators were applauded for their contributions. Dr. Lena Dempewolf stated that BES-Net TT will digitise the output and provide feedback to participants. An invitation was extended to all participants to indicate their interest in contributing to development of the pollinator strategy by using the starting point of the draft Theory of Change.

For more information on this process, please contact us at [besnet.tt@gmail.com](mailto:besnet.tt@gmail.com)



*Photo credit: Marten Schoonman*



## BES-Net Triologue in Vietnam

The regular Triologue session of the Global BES-Net programme was held in Hanoi, Vietnam. The event brought together teams from various countries with projects supported by the BES Solution Fund, for updates, discussions and



experience exchanges. The team from the BES-Net TT project that attended the event was: Dr. Lena Dempewolf (Ministry of Planning and Development); Mr. Shane Ballah (BES-Net TT Project Manager); Ms Rosemary Lall (UNDP), Mr. Ameer Roopnarinesingh (Forestry Division); Mrs. Mia Persad-Douglas (Tobago Apicultural Society); and Mr. Darren Henry (Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club).

### Upcoming activities this quarter!

November 22 2023: Webinar—Results of pollinator bats research study

November 29 2023: Webinar—Results of seagrass research study

Visit our Facebook page for updates!

**The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) TT project is jointly implemented by:**



SUPPORTED BY



**SwedBio**  
a programme at Stockholm Resilience Centre

**We would love to hear from you and get your feedback on this issue of The Buzz!**

**Contact us at:**

BES-Net TT Project Management Unit  
Environmental Policy and Planning Division  
Ministry of Planning and Development  
Level 7, Tower C, International Waterfront Complex,  
Wrightson Road, Port of Spain

e-mail address: [besnet.tt@gmail.com](mailto:besnet.tt@gmail.com)

**Follow on Social Media:**

<https://www.facebook.com/besnet.tt/>

<https://www.instagram.com/besnet.tt/>

<https://www.tiktok.com/@besnet.tt>

[www.twitter.com/BESNet\\_UNDP](http://www.twitter.com/BESNet_UNDP)

