

*Sustainable tourism and responsible travel are hot items these days now that we all realize that we should be careful with our resources. Paradise Bay, the recently opened resort & spa in Grenada takes sustainable very literal and implemented the concept in every aspect of her activities.*

## Energy

In March 2007 they installed a 80 kW windmill with an expected yearly yield of 180,000 kWh. It is the first utility-grade windmill installed in Caricom and we could not find any resort that already installed a windmill, although there are several with plans and one under construction. With an estimated yearly power use of 120,000 kWh the resort will be better than zero carbon, once the connection to the mains is realized in January 2008, as the remainder of the energy will be sold to the local electricity company.



To minimize the energy consumption the resort uses air conditioners with heat recovery units, which convert the heat loss into hot water, in supplement to solar water heaters. In addition, a high efficiency dish washer with hot water connection is installed. Although with a smaller impact, energy saving lamps combined with solar lights are used. Energy efficient refrigerators and washing machines will be installed soon.

Last July and August the resort sold energy saving light bulbs to the local public and offered them a free lobster lunch with Champagne for every 4 light bulbs purchased. On a regular basis informal seminars are held and articles distributed to create awareness of energy saving. In a country where most appliances are only bought on price –and thus energy inefficient- this is not a luxury. The owners typically earn back the price difference with a energy saving class A refrigerator within 1 1/2 year. Free seminars at the windmill explain green energy but focus mainly on energy conservation.



Paradise Bay encourages other resorts to use green energy, practice energy conservation and assist them in their feasibility study, give free practical advice and guide them towards solutions.

## **CARBON FREE VACATION: for flights, stay and transport/activities**

As of Q1 2008 Paradise Bay will have implemented a carbon offset program where all flights, local transport/activities by guests will be offset by carbon credits purchased by the resort, on an automatic, (later in 2008 audited) basis, in addition to the stay which is already carbon free because of the windmill that supplies energy back to the electricity net. The guest's vacation is therefore guaranteed carbon neutral. The carbon offset program plants trees in Ethiopia which has additional social (firewood) and ecological (stop erosion) benefits. For a typical transatlantic flight 50 trees are planted, much more than most carbon offset programs that do not consider the re-emission of carbon dioxide after the lifetime of the tree. The program considers all guests starting at 1.1.2008

### **Water**

Paradise Bay built a surface well with underground channels to collect the rainwater from the hills around the resort. As there is no industry nor inorganic agriculture the water is extremely pure, so filtering is almost an unnecessary luxury. For the drinking water, they go to a source in the mountains.

### **Laundry**

The resort asks guests to keep using the towels and bed linen as long as is comfortable for them.

### **Use of organic materials**

The resort is converting to use organic soap, shampoo, conditioner, lotion in dispensers, cleaning materials. They use organic meat and vegetables, mostly from their own organic gardens. They preferably purchase locally made goods.

### **Social responsibility**

Paradise Bay hires local staff where possible so the area benefits from the resort's presence. After hurricane Ivan the resort set up **Recovery Grenada Council** to distribute food, water, medicines, vitamin pills, seeds and Christmas presents in the wide area (report available on request), initially from own means, later supported by teams in Canada, the USA and the Netherlands. They also help local cultural organizations with modest in-kind donations.

From April 2008 the resort starts a revitalization program for crop and tree farmers:

After hurricane Ivan (9/2004) many gardens became inaccessible by dead trees and debris. Many of those that could be accessed received assistance, notably from Oxfam. But many of those further away are still not in operation. Hurricane Emily (7/2005) was not a motivation to get started again and several farmers that had just rebuilt gave up and moved into construction which was high in demand after Ivan without realizing this is a dead end. Now that the reconstruction boom is over they lose their jobs and after a while they do not have any reserves to start up their farm. Paradise Bay's revitalization program will assist them to clear their land, plough and provide basic tools seeds, nursery and other materials where needed.

Many of them never restarted their farm after hurricane Ivan and moved into construction work. Now that the reconstruction boom is over they find themselves without a steady job and typically have no reserves. This is not only a social problem for the farmers themselves: vegetables now have to be partly imported to satisfy the demand at sharply increased prices. The program helps the farmers to get back in tune, from clearing their overgrown land to providing manure, seeds and seedlings, as well as advice on how to produce more economically.

For these programs the resorts introduced the Volunteer Vacation that offers a healthy balance between volunteer work and enjoying the island, while getting to know the friendly population. The resort offers free accommodation to the volunteers, who only pay for meals, drinks and services.