

On Wednesday the OECS Environmental Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) will be conducting a major Solid Waste Management Symposium in Grenada.

The symposium will be staged from June 4th-6th, 2003.

ESDU is teaming up with its regional partners through the OECS Solid & Ship Generated Waste Management Project, known as the Solid Waste Management Entities (SWME) alongside the project funders, namely the World Bank Group, the Global Environment Trust Fund and the Caribbean Development Bank to pull the curtains down to signify the closure to the regional aspect of this milestone project.

The governments of the region in the 1990's conceived the OECS Solid & Ship-Generated Waste Management Project and the project was borne in the late 1990's targeting the islands of the OECS region.

Since project inception, the governments have invested millions of dollars in the setup of national waste management entities with professional staff, the upgrading of existing Disposal Sites, the construction of first ever Sanitary Landfills, the procurement of equipment and the implementation of community, national, regional and international training initiatives.

Today, these solid waste management entities are moving towards greater independence for increased efficiency in the delivery of services, better accountability and continuing viability. There is also the recognition that the people of the OECS sub-region are more conscious of their behavior through solid and hazardous waste environmental education programs to maintain a clean and healthy environment for one and all.

The head of ESDU Dr. Vasantha Chase says the seven-year old programme has so far accomplished at least 95 % of its objectives. These include the development and passage of updated legislation in most countries, the establishment of dedicated institutions for the management of Solid Waste in all participating countries, the development of sanitary landfills and substantial skills training in waste management including the delicate area of biomedical waste.

In addition, five OECS member counties are nearing completion of a strategy that will be a

blueprint for managing Solid Waste.