

# CRew+ LETTER

Implementing  
integrated water and  
wastewater  
management  
solutions for a clean  
and healthy  
Caribbean

## In this edition

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**1** Message from the project coordinator

**2** Project status

**3** GEF CRew+ Minds

**4** CWWA 2025

**5** Holidays Messages from the Agencies

**6** Data Visualization Project

**7** Digital Archive

# 1

## Message from the project coordinator




It has been a pleasure to grow both personally and professionally alongside all of you on this exciting and rewarding journey with GEF CReW+. With this farewell message, I begin my final communication in this newsletter, as the project is scheduled to conclude in March 2026. After six years of implementing an ambitious and challenging project, we are left with a positive feeling, having achieved numerous successes, gained valuable experiences, and learned a great deal.

During this time, we have witnessed the growth of the water and sanitation sector in the Caribbean region. Although there is still work to be done and continued collaboration is needed among all key stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure that every person in the Caribbean region has access to safe and reliable water and sanitation services, I would like to share our contributions through a reflection on each of the project components.

In the institutional component, progress has been made in the preparation of policies, regulations, standards, and guidelines, which have helped to trigger demonstration projects and deliver direct results to beneficiaries. A group of countries has shown improvement in the preparation of standards and guidelines, a prerequisite for updating regulations, while other countries, more advanced in this area, have already updated their regulations to create a better institutional framework for the sector.

In the financial component, access to financing remains a challenge for many countries. While technical expertise is strong, the region is financially constrained. Innovative mechanisms are in place and ready to be replicated, but flexible and blended financing tools are needed, and governments must implement pilot programs or innovative regulatory sandboxes to safely evaluate new models, such as green bonds, performance-based payment schemes, or public-private partnerships.





In the technical component, we firmly believe that a suitable environment is key to a successful intervention on the ground. The project has successfully implemented water and sanitation solutions in indigenous, rural, and peri-urban communities, but we have also experienced several setbacks, where we were unable to make progress due to issues such as permits, the lack of appropriate and community-accepted technical solutions, insufficient funding, and changes in national priorities, among others.

In the knowledge component, it is important to emphasize that inclusive communication strategies, which link technical results to livelihoods and health, are essential for maintaining political and social commitment beyond the project's duration. Communication remains another key factor in driving change at all levels.

Participation, coordination, and communication guarantee sustainability and continuity. Institutional, technical, and financial solutions are successful when they are socially accepted, created through a participatory process, and sustained locally, and this sustainability is achieved when communities, local institutions, and decision-makers understand and trust the process.

All of this has happened especially thanks to our colleagues in the Ministries, National Agencies, and Key Partners who make everything we have achieved possible, so on behalf of the entire Project team, thank you very much! Anthony, Carlon, Anthony, Leo, Ervin, Camila, Ana, Jorge, Jose Miguel, Vivian, Laura, Mabel, Nancy, Maria, Titus, Nestor, Rensforde, Felicia, Loly, Victor, Finally, I would like to wish you happy holidays and a prosperous new year with your family and loved ones.



**Pedro Moreo**  
Regional Coordinator

# 2 Project status

## GEF CReW+ Timeline



# 3 GEF CReW+ Minds



**Irving Olvera**  
Head of Department Cost Engineering CONAGUA  
Quintana Roo, Mexico

“The project allows us to strengthen the conservation of local water resources and consolidate water governance through engagement with communities and technical support.”

[Read more](#)



**Gustavo Alvarado**  
Civil Engineer, Cartagena Convention Secretariat  
Turrialba, Costa Rica

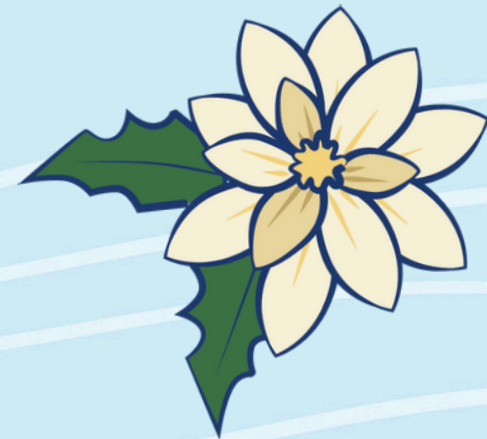
“The basic idea of this intervention is to build an artificial wetland at the outlet of the currently operating reactor, providing additional treatment to improve the quality of the treated water.”

[Read more](#)

# 4

## CWWA 2025

GEF CRew+ participated in the 21st Annual High-Level Forum for Caribbean Ministers Responsible for Water in Belize, showcasing key results for the region through three case studies.



Improvement of the wastewater system in Kwakwani, Guyana, a project with the capacity to help 10,000 households or 40,000 beneficiaries by treating 3,650,000 cubic meters of water.

43 new eco-technologies have been implemented in Quintana Roo, Mexico, benefiting two indigenous communities in Puerto Morelos.

These eco-technologies impact 383 beneficiaries through the treatment of 13,961 cubic meters of water per year.



In the case of Panama, the GEF CRew+ discussed the artificial wetland in the Guna Yala indigenous community, Panama, with the potential to benefit 300 households, equivalent to 1,500 beneficiaries, and treat 54,750 cubic meters of water.



## 5

# Messages from the agencies at the end of the year



"As we wrap up the project, we reminisce on the lessons learned and solutions implemented, promoting that future projects incorporate what has been achieved by GEF CRew+. We will continue pushing forward with innovative and resilient solutions for the Caribbean and pivoting solutions for IWWM in the region". Rodrigo Riquelme, Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist.

"Connecting the dots between sanitation and a clean and healthier Caribbean Sea has been crucial to raise awareness about the impacts of human activities to marine ecosystems. GEF CRew+ steered solutions in an area that is often overlooked in policies and investments, bringing sanitation to the spotlight is critical to achieve integrated changes.s". Isabelle Vanderbeck, Task Manager - International Waters.



"The Cartagena Convention Secretariat is proud of the contributions of the project to the Wider Caribbean Region, specially to advance water and sanitation. We acknowledge the continued work of the project in supporting the ratification and implementation of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities under the Cartagena Convention (LBS Protocol). This was particularly important in 2025 as the two LBS Regional Activity Centers, supported the development of Technical Papers which were tabled during the 7 LBS Scientific Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting and 7 LBS Conference of Parties. The GEF CRew+ also pivoted key partnerships for the region, including support for the 34th CWWA Annual Conference and Exhibition, RARE, and the United Nations University Institute for Water Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH)". Laverne Walker, Programme Management Officer.

"We are delighted to keep collaborating with all partners in the wrap up of the project. OAS's Americas Water Program continues its commitment and willingness to support GEF CRew+ and the region, in tandem with expanding and consolidating our work in the Wider Caribbean and its ocean governance". Andres Sánchez, Program Manager for Water for the Americas.



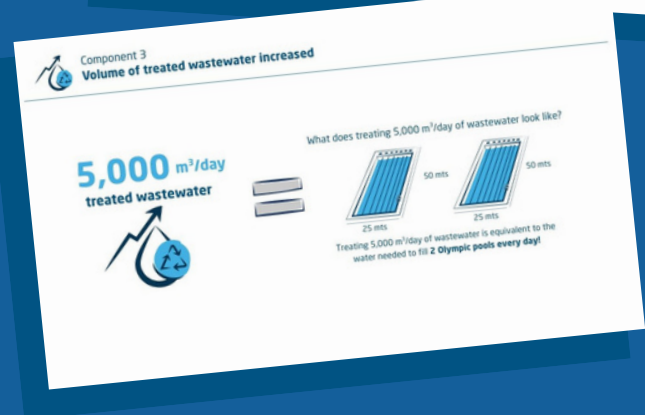
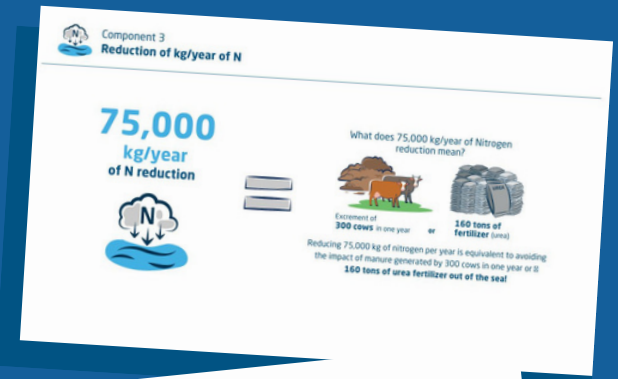
# 6

## Data Visualization Project

The project coordination group has been working on an initiative to graphically visualize the project's quantitative results.

This initiative divides the GEF CREW+ results matrix by data categories, starting with the four components, and emphasizing key data such as cubic meters of water treated, reduction of polluting gases, beneficiaries, and communities, among others.

The project will have a dedicated, interactive section on the website, allowing users to navigate between the components and data extracted from the matrix, and to link them to each country participating in the project.



# 7

## Digital archive

One of the main focuses of Component IV of the project is knowledge sharing, and to this end, a repository was created within the website for all products and materials produced within the framework of the project.

The repository is still under construction, but it will be available on the website with a dedicated section to easily locate products by project component. These products will also be accessible from the tabs for each country.

Once the project is completed, the repository will remain accessible along with the website, as a legacy to facilitate the scaling and replicability of the interventions.

