

## Project Update: December 2013

A number of exhibitions have been held in the Republic of Seychelles in 2013 but nothing like the Ecologically Distinct and Globally Endangered Coral Cartoon exhibition. This was the first exhibition that had an informal opening, and targeted children from both primary and secondary schools around Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. The day of the exhibition was a Friday in October, and it was a very hot day. The venue was the Natural History Museum in the town, Victoria. The Perseverance Primary school students came dressed for the beach and did a short but very interesting sketch on how important a very healthy coral reef is, while the Beau Vallon secondary students came with their guitar and beautiful voices to entertain the guests. I made short opening remarks, focusing on the importance of coral reefs for our beautiful islands and stretched on the number of threats that coral reefs face, making sure that those present understood that we each had a role to play in our coral reef conservation.

Ms Rachel Bristol, EDGE project coordinator in Seychelles, then talked about EDGE corals in Seychelles. It was then time for the prize giving, with most of the prizes being beautiful and informative books about the marine life as well as arts and crafts materials for participating schools. Most of the prizes were sponsored by the Rufford Foundation. The afternoon ended with refreshments, and guests and winners visiting the exhibition. However, all did not end there. The exhibition moved to La Digue Island the following week and was viewed by students and tourists, at the Veuve Reserve. Then, it went to Praslin, where it stayed at the Vallee de Mai education and information centre, thanks to our partner the Seychelles Island Foundation. Then it was back to Mahe, and here, the exhibition was hosted by the University of Seychelles. The cartoon exhibits are back in the office but it's not all over yet. The cartoons will be used in a special e-newsletter edition early 2014. In the end, I'm sure most of Seychelles will have seen the exhibition, at one of the venues or online, and that this will have also contributed towards changing attitude and better conservation for our coral reefs.

