

NOTA DE PRENSA

News Media Panamá

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SEEDS OF KNOWLEDGE AND VIVARIUM LAB, INITIATIVES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE

- Enel Green Power, Ciudad del Saber Foundation and Imaginari Foundation join forces to benefit producers from the Chiriquí and Coclé provinces

Panamá, June 8th, 2021 - Small farmers from the province of Chiriquí and Coclé had the opportunity to receive an integral training at the Center for Sustainable Environmental Development (CEDESAM) of Mi Ambiente, thanks to an alliance between Enel Green Power, Fundación Ciudad del Saber and Fundación Imaginari.

This arises as part of the company's interest in developing local initiatives, in line with its global strategy of promoting the sustainable growth of local communities, climate action and decarbonization. To achieve this, the company understands the importance of creating links with the communities and stimulating the participation of all stakeholders, public and private, that can help reduce and / or compensate their ecological footprint, developing specific initiatives aimed at the creation of agribusiness, mainly among producers in the areas close to their centers of operations in the provinces of Chiriquí and Coclé.

"Beyond the value generated by the production of clean energy, with which we directly aim at our global decarbonization objectives, at Enel Green Power we strive to create alliances to promote the sustainable growth of the communities near our plants and we do it with organizations that share our vision and values," said **Tanaida Martínez, Head of Sustainability at Enel Green Power Panamá.**

In this way, the company managed to create a profitable synergy between two of the projects it finances and promotes in the Chiriquí and Coclé regions: the Vivarium Lab project, developed by the Imaginari Foundation, and the Seeds of Knowledge Project, developed by the Ciudad del Saber Foundation. In the first one, work is being done to form alliances and collaboration networks between producer organizations, authorities and students, in order to restore soils, afforest 30 thousand native seedlings within 3 years and promote new ventures; green businesses or environmental services that improve the quality of life of the participating organizations.

On the other hand, the Seeds of Knowledge project promotes the formation of capacities in topics such as: individual and collective empowerment, understanding of the market and its adaptation to it, creativity and innovation, entrepreneurship and development of their business and how to carry their financial strategy All with the orientation towards business growth and the differentiation of their products as an individual entrepreneur and innovator, and / or within a comprehensive work nucleus. In addition, it works to stimulate green enterprises aimed at the proper use, utilization, and conservation of valuable ecosystems in order to contribute to the company's decarbonization and climate action objectives.

The blending of both projects, oriented to capacity building of community organizations, will allow the activation of a network of alliances with the company and the stimulation of green enterprises in both regions.

At the CEDESAM facilities, in Río Hato, Coclé province, the enthusiasm and interest of the participating producers was evident, some of them proudly displaying their products and willing to dedicate almost a full week to obtain knowledge from experts from various organizations.

Evelyn García, Head of the Forest Seed Bank of Panama, stressed that, when establishing some type of plantation or orchard, the main thing to keep in mind is the seed. Therefore, as part of the training, the producers were able to visit the Seed Bank and learn about the importance of proper seed management to maintain good production and establish the crops in suitable sites, according to the species that they want to produce.

As the manager of the only seed bank in the country, Evelyn dreams with the possibility to establish small banks of agricultural seeds so that each community has the capability of having seeds that are adapted to the conditions of the sites where they produce and continue sowing them on the following years. *“A bank in each town, in each community would be effective to guarantee people's food security. They would no longer have to buy transgenic seeds that are not going to adapt to the soil of their farms,”* she highlighted.

For her part, **Lourdes Lozano, from the Imaginari Foundation and the Vibarium Lab program**, highlighted that, far beyond reforestation, what they want to achieve, together with Enel, is that the producers have all the knowledge of how to collect a seed, which are the best trees to plant on their lands, how to face the climatic emergency that we are living now, how to reintroduce native species that have been lost due to the climate crisis, how to take care of those trees until they have enough time and they no longer die. And if it becomes necessary to replace them along the way, that they can do it themselves.

“The entire country, especially in the countryside, the small producers are suffering from great discouragement because they are being very neglected in their production. This demotivation is overcome in this way, bringing them response, offering them knowledge, so that they raise their experience and their knowledge to another level and see the opportunities they have to ensure small businesses to live better. These people know that sometimes they have lost everything, so they are here for that, to reactivate themselves, to work together,” said Lourdes.

Among the topics developed in the 4 days of training were, Environment and Sustainable Development Concepts, Factors that influence the quality of forest seeds, Circular economy and environmental business, Organic Family Farming; Example of Successful Agricultural Activity, Importance of the Organization in a Community, among others.

Enel Green Power, within the Enel Group, is dedicated to the development and operation of renewables across the world, with a presence in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa and Oceania. Enel Green Power is a global leader in the green energy sector with an installed capacity of around 49 GW across a generation mix that includes wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower, and is at the forefront of integrating innovative technologies into renewable power plants.

Enel Green Power Panama is the main renewable energy operator in the country, in terms of installed capacity. The company operates the 300 MW Fortuna Hydroelectric Plant and the 12 MW Chiriquí photovoltaic plant, both in the province of Chiriquí, as well as the 42 MW Sol Real photovoltaic complex, composed of five plants distributed between the provinces of Chiriquí and Coclé and Estrella Solar of 8 MW in Coclé.

