The Minister of VROMI, the honorable Angel Meyers, attended the 2016 Waste Expo in Las Vegas earlier this month.

The main purpose of this visit to the Waste Expo was to increase the general knowledge regarding the various waste collection and treatment technologies. Furthermore, to learn from the best practices which should lead to the implementation of quick wins concerning collection and treatment of waste as well as cleanliness of our country’s infrastructure. “The current issues at the Landfill cannot be seen separate from this process, we must look at a comprehensive solution and seek to implement mitigation measures.”

Based on the knowledge obtained through the various meetings and presentations held at the waste expo, the Honorable Minister is strengthened in his vision regarding a way forward with waste collection and treatment on St. Maarten.

The intention therefore is to within short launch an awareness campaign on this topic, “our country’s cleanliness should be a concern of all citizens, businesses and of course Government.”

Recycling is the practice of reusing items that would otherwise be discarded as waste. Recycling is not only good for the environment, but it also help prevent landfill issues.

The goals for the recycling project initiated by the Ministry of VROMI is to educate the general public of Sint Maarten on recycling, and how they can contribute to reducing the amount of waste brought to the landfill. Recycling bins are being purchased and placed in various locations which will later be announced in more detail. Various locations include, hotels, schools, Government entities and districts. The collection of the recyclables will be conducted by the contracted garbage haulers and brought to the landfill for further processing. The recyclables will either be stored for the waste to energy project or compacted and shipped to recycle warehouses abroad. Garbage that will be separated are, paper, glass, plastic, aluminum and cardboard.

With this recycling initiative, the waste that is brought to the landfill is expected to be reduced by 40%.

2016 Waste EXPO

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Minister Meyers attends the Summit of the Overseas Countries and Territories


The 1st Summit of OCT Energy Ministers served as a platform to finalize and sign party to the current targets in the Sustainable Energy Roadmap, drafted by the OCTs. Furthermore, the summit was used as a platform to identify and establish the priorities for the 11th EDF Thematic Program (€18M) which concerns all global OCTs. During the summit, the concept of the joint OCT-EU Energy declaration was also initiated to further declare the commitment of the OCTs towards the reduction of the use of fossil fuels in the OCTs. During the 14th OCT-EU Forum held in Brussels in February, 2016, the Chair of OCTA signed the joined OCT-EU Energy Declaration on behalf of all OCTs, including St Maarten.

The 2nd Summit of Energy Ministers, served to increase understanding of the added value the OCTs - all islands - represent to the EU in terms of open laboratories, but also grid stability, energy storage and stand-alone systems. Furthermore, OCT Energy Ministers were provided with a menu for designing actions in support of the transition towards a sustainable energy future and discuss the elements for the advancement of the programming of the resources available under the 11th European Development Fund.

The 1st day of the OCT Energy Summit took place at the European Parliament. There were two sessions in which OCTs exchanged on the progress of the sustainable energy transition, as well as a dedicated high level panel discussion during the Policy Conference of the EU Sustainable Energy Week. The Climate Change Quick Scan of the OCTs carried out by the International Renewable Energy Agency, IRENA, was also presented during day 1. The 2nd day of the Summit included sessions on the promotion of policy frameworks for investment, as well as the opportunities to leverage additional resources. During day two, presentations were given by representatives from the European Investment Bank, the Carbon War Room and the European Commission. During the summit, a session was held to endorse the Summary Sheet for the Thematic Program which pertains to the OCT program on Climate Change with a focus on Disaster Risk reduction and Sustainable Energy and concerns an envelope of €18 million. During the extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of OCTA, a unanimous vote could not be met and as such the vote amendment of the OCTA budget for technical support could not be carried. The matters will be further discussed during the Ministerial Meeting in Aruba in February 2017.
Kimsha Parking Lot

The Kimsha parking lot will consist of 175 parking spaces of which 6 are designated for the disabled. The parking lot will be completely lit with lighting and constructed from concrete. The area is low lying it can be flooded by sea surge during calamities and/or severe weather which happens to all the areas along the coastline. It was with this in mind that government chose to build the parking out of concrete and not asphalt to ensure that damage would not likely incur so easily. Proper drainage has been made to ensure all waters run off to the sea when ever there is rainfall and other water issues. The concrete pavement will also ensure minimal damage during hurricane season.

The parking lot will take approximately 60 to 80 working days to be completed. Windward Roads will be overseeing the project.

Necessary measures are being taken by the responsible Ministries with regards to the buildings presently erected unlawfully on the parcel of land allocated for the construction of the parking lot. The parking lot is meant to alleviate the parking situation in Simpson Bay where it is extremely busy due to the amount of restaurants and other establishments that are situated on the strip. The construction of the parking lot will be the first phase in the plans to upgrade the infrastructure of the Simpson Bay strip.

Hurricane Preparedness Tips!

- Have stocked food and supplies not only for the storm but for the possible aftermath in case you lose power and water
- Keep all necessary emergency numbers available
- Remain indoors when the Eye moves over your area because the storm will resume shortly
- Prepare/strengthen your home by storing loose objects in your yard, trim or remove damaged trees and limbs, secure and reinforce roof, windows and doors Make a family emergency plan
- Identify your trusted sources of information during the hurricane and safety shelters in your district
- Put together a disaster supply kit, including flashlights, batteries, cash, first aid supplies, and copies of critical information / documentation
- Follow the hurricane timeline to know when the storm is anticipated to hit and the impact that is projected for your location.
- Fill your car’s gas tank
- Have multi-purpose tools available

The Minister of VROMI wishes the public of Sint Maarten a safe Hurricane Season 2016!