Published on *Ciencia Puerto Rico* (https://www.cienciapr.org)

$ 50,000 to restore the shine to the Bioluminescent Bay of Vieques [1]

Submitted on 13 May 2019 - 1:49pm

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Photo: Puerto Rico Tourism Company

As part of its commitment to the economic development of Puerto Rico and its long-term sustainability, the non-profit entity CONPRmetidos made a donation of $ 50,000 to the Resilient Community Center of the Conservation and History Trust of Vieques. The grant was made to help fund efforts focused on the restoration of Vieques Bioluminescent Bay.

The Bay, recognized worldwide as a unique natural treasure in the world, and of vital importance for the ecotourism sector in Isla Nena, suffered critical damages at the hands of Hurricane Mará in 2017. The donation will be used to finance the creation of nurseries mangroves, replant flora along the Bay, and for the construction of a new erosion control infrastructure.

According to Lirio Márquez-D'Acunti, executive director of the Trust, "Hurricane Maria impacted the mangrove forest and the erosion control measures that prevent sediment run-off from

affecting water quality. and repair the green infrastructure built in. These actions will create more jobs, educational opportunities and help restore the emblematic bay of Vieques. "

The Bioluminescent Bay of Puerto Mosquito, considered the brightest in the world according to the Guinness World Record, is an extraordinary natural system. Its crystal clear waters and mangrove forests are the perfect habitat for Pyrodinium bahamense, the bioluminescent plankton that makes the bay shine.

However, Hurricane Maria wrested the mangrove forest and erosion control measures that previously prevented sediment runoff from affecting water quality. Without manual reforestation efforts, it would take 15 to 30 years for the surrounding mangrove of the Bioluminescent Bay of Vieques to recover naturally. Recovery without help could result in changes in the morphology of the bay that could permanently affect the density and brightness of the plankton.

Urgent save the Bay

The Bioluminescent Bay is instrumental for the tourist economy of Vieques. Its brightness attracts 50,000 to 70,000 visitors a year from all over the world, generating hundreds of direct and indirect jobs on the island. It is one of the most pristine bioluminescent bays on the planet. Hurricanes Maria and Irma devastated the built infrastructure and the mangrove forest surrounding the Bay, which is an integral part of their ecology. The bioluminescent plankton that gives the bay its brightness depends on the mangrove nutrients to survive.

"Through educational programs and exhibitions, we educate our community, tourists, students and policymakers about the importance of preserving our precious Bay. One of my roles is to continuously seek the best resources, strategies and methods to monitor, study and preserve the Bay, "said Mark Martin Bras, Director of Community Relations and Scientific Research of the Conservation Trust & History of Vieques

About ConPRmetidos

ConPRmetidos is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 2012. Its mission is to create a stable, productive and self-sufficient Puerto Rico, the entity strategically involves the island's diaspora to maximize its resources , talent and relationships in support of equitable and systemic change in Puerto Rico.

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- Environmental and agricultural sciences [3]

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