

A visit to Martinique by Jérôme Clément, Director of the FNJFC, at the invitation of our partner association SEVE

As part of the alliance signed last year with the **SEVE association** in Martinique (Synergie pour l'Environnement et la Valorisation des Espèces), the Federation Director visited them to see how the garden projects initiated in 2010 are progressing, to offer his expertise in terms of the management and running of new projects, but also to take part in a seminar in which he was the “patron” to the Regional Board.

With regards to the ongoing projects, the allotment gardens have a few problems with developing. These are due to the distance of the allotments from the homes, but also perhaps due to a certain loss of people's interest in the traditional gardening culture (creole gardens).

Today, only the ten allotments of the Ducos site work properly. However, it seems that a fair number of residents in small apartment blocks are now growing plants at the bottom of the buildings of their own accord. What's more, local authorities and councils for social housing are becoming increasingly interested in allotment gardens, so there is potential worth noting.

This process featured in the Regional Board's auditorium. The theme of the day: “Let's cultivate our way of life: a nutritive garden to educate, integrate and re-unite our citizens”. This allowed us to highlight the topic of allotment gardens in their different areas (environmental, social, health...).

The participants proved themselves to be particularly receptive, and a representative of the Regional Board suggested focusing on the support that the institution could bring to the project. The Regional Health Authority went on to highlight the potential role of allotment gardens in the fight against obesity, which is a very worrying topic in Martinique and which features globally on a national level in the National Food Plan.

Outside of the allotments, Seve has also instigated “integration allotments” intended for women who are alone and/or in a precarious situation. The activities in the community of Lorrain consist of kitchen and floral gardens with a cost-conscious purpose. Lastly, an arboretum with kitchen gardens has just been opened for the elderly in the Morne Rouge community.

So, there is no lack of projects and activities, and these are starting to spread to the neighbouring lands of Guadeloupe and Guyana.