**Interview with Colby Poerio, project coordinator Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC)cpoerio@epicislands.org**

**1. Why did the Perpetual Plastic by EPIC choose to support Science Week at Sister Regina Primary School?**

We are always in favor of efforts to promote scientific learning for students on the island, especially regarding conservation and protecting Sint Maarten. Science week was a great way for us to get involved and provide hands on experiences for the students that promote environmental preservation. Our hope is that these experiences will inspire a generation of future environmental advocates.

**2. What message did the Perpetual Plastic by EPIC hope to pass on to the students?**

We hope that the students have pride in the island and understand the importance of protecting it. We want them to know what will happen if we allow further destruction, and we want them to see how simple it can be to get involved and clean up the island. Our intention is not only that they learn these lessons but that they take them out into the community as well and advocate for the island to their friends and family members.

**3. How can schools, like Sister Regina Primary School, and community organizations, like the Perpetual Plastic by EPIC, collaborate more effectively for environmental education?**

Schools can advocate environmental protection by incorporating conservation into their curriculums and including hands on education and field trips into science programs. By collaborating with community organizations, students can have real world experiences that demonstrate the impacts of environmental protection.

**4. What impact do you believe this generation can have on the future of our planet?**

This generation will dictate the narrative of destruction on the island and can change our consumption and development into sustainable practices. It was not many generations ago that people were fishing in Simpson Bay Lagoon and benefiting from untouched coastal areas, but because of development these opportunities are no longer available. This generation of students has an unprecedented opportunity to return the island to its former glory and restore the ecosystem services that benefit humans.

**5. What small everyday actions do you recommend for families who want to live more sustainably?**

Families can be conscious consumers by limiting the amount of plastic they use and ensuring their plastic and other trash is disposed of correctly and recycled and composted whenever possible. Community members can also get involved in the same volunteer opportunities as the children, such as our SXM DOET projects on May 16 and 17. For more information on how you can be involved, you can visit our website [epicislands.org](http://epicislands.org/) and follow us on social media @epicislands