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## DOMESTIC

### **Grand Barbe luxury eco-tourism project progressing despite hurdles | 27 January 2024**

The Grand Barbe luxury eco-tourism project is progressing well, despite hurdles during the project planning phase, the Islands Development Company (IDC) has said.

In a press conference on Thursday, chief executive Glenny Savy acknowledged delays, shedding light on challenges faced relating to the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA).

The setback arose when the British developer, McCorkell, appointed the Island Conservation Society (ICS) to conduct the EIA. The Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment initially expressed concerns about a potential conflict of interest, given ICS's active engagement in conservation and research on outer islands, including Silhouette.

Despite initial reservations, the ministry has authorised ICS' appointment after an investigation, delaying the project by three months.

According to Mr Savy, ICS's expertise and knowledge of the island's environmental intricacies make them the most suitable for the crucial EIA.

McCorkell, who is known for similar projects in Kenya, can now proceed with the EIA and project plans.

Asserting that the project will be the most eco-friendly in Seychelles, Mr Savy highlighted the commitment to sustainability, conservation, and green energy, with plans for a solar facility and a sewage and waste system.

Following a recent site visit and discussions with IDC, Mr McCorkell has agreed to scale back the number of rooms to a maximum of 25.

“The Grand Barbe project aligns with developments in Kenya's eco-tourism sector, offering a unique opportunity for travellers, while Seychelles benefits from ecotourism,” Mr Savy asserted.

“The goal of this initiative is to attract travellers who are currently visiting Kenya for its land safari experience. Instead of dedicating an entire week solely to Kenya, we encourage them to split their time, spending half in Kenya and half at Grand Barbe in Seychelles, offering them the opportunity to explore a distinct environment,” he said.

The IDC's subsidiary, the Green Island Construction Company (GICC), will handle the infrastructure construction. It is hoped that the project will be up and running within 18 months.

The developer was one of three foreign companies to submit a project proposal in December 2022.

The Grand Barbe development project, with its roots going back many years, is poised to contribute to Seychelles' tourism landscape, offering a harmonious blend of luxury and environmental responsibility.

**Laura Pillay**

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