

# *Successful Use of Permaculture in Cuban Community*

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Havana, June 5 (RHC) – The creation of solar cookers, bio-digesters and other environmental initiatives demonstrate the effectiveness of permaculture principles adopted by the community inhabiting the karst plateau on the large Bellamar cave, in this western Cuban city.

Some 11 hectares of land have been transformed since four years ago as part of an initiative aimed at the optimal utilization of available resources, producing enough food for about 150 people, and reducing water and energy consumption.

Esteban Grau, representing Antonio Núñez Jiménez Foundation for Nature and Man in the province of Matanzas, explained that the project will help safeguarding the environment of the beautiful cave system endowed with unique geological formations.

The so called dry bath, sanitary service that does not require any liquid and allows human waste to be stored in underground compartments for about eight months to then be used as fertilizer, is among the most notable eco-constructions.

It also operates a laboratory to study water quality, and spiral, corrugated and other unique forms furrows that allow maximizing arable land, Grau, also President of Matanzas Speleological Committee (EMC by its Spanish acronym), said.

Grau also said that young people mostly from France come to the site each year to share experiences in sustainable practices, useful for protecting the natural environment without giving up the fulfillment of basic human needs.

This space, where fruit and timber trees are grown and promotes the breeding of animals such as rabbits and Tilapia, includes a documentation center provided with volumes and audiovisuals related to different sciences such as caving.

According to Nelvis Gomez, specialist from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, the large Bellamar cavern, Cuban National Monument, is included in the network of twenty protected areas in the territory of Matanzas province.

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