



## GREEN CLIMATE FUND

ECLAC CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR  
PARTICIPATES IN GREEN CLIMATE  
FUND DIALOGUE

## POSITIVE COMMUNITY

POSITIVE ROLE MODELS SHOWCASED AT  
COMMUNITY EVENT  
IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

## CLIMATE CHANGE

ECLAC CONTRIBUTES TO  
DISCUSSION AT THE REGIONAL  
SEMINAR ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

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Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers strategic insights into the latest projects, publications, technical assistance missions and research carried out by ECLAC Caribbean. In addition to these, sneak previews are provided of the most salient upcoming events, alongside enriching follow-ups to previously covered issues. With a view to featuring a variety of facets of Caribbean life and lifestyle, The Hummingbird also zooms in on cultural activities and landmark occurrences through an eye-opening regional round-up.

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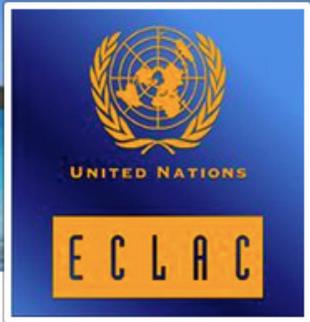
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# ECLAC CARIBBEAN



UNITED NATIONS

REGIONAL COMMISSION



**ECLAC Caribbean**  
Non-profit Organisation

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## December Events

**1** World AIDS Day  
1 December 2018

**2** International Day for the Abolition of Slavery  
2 December 2018

**3** International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
3 December 2018

**9** Human Rights Day  
9 December 2018

**10** Human Rights Day  
10 December 2018

**ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Nov 24

Performance of the skit 'Positive Father Support' by the Ryu Dan Dojo- Youth Empowerment Centre followed by a discussion on positive fatherhood and positive youth.



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**ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Nov 23

The increasing impact of climate change across the Caribbean calls for a common and shared understanding among policy makers...



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**ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Nov 19

Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, underscores the importance of building the resilience of Caribbean SIDS in the face of the devastating impacts of climate change.



brought us together last October here.  
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## POSITIVE ROLE MODELS SHOWCASED AT COMMUNITY EVENT IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**E**CLAC Caribbean spearheaded a recent community outreach activity in Cunupia, Trinidad and Tobago, to celebrate two important events. These were the International Men's Day (19 November), and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November).

"Positive Community, Positive Role Models" was the theme of the event, which took place on 24 November 2018, at the Enterprise Government Primary School, which is located in a vulnerable community of T&T. The event, which was free and open to the public, offered a unique opportunity to highlight the important role that men and boys can and should play in building strong and cohesive families and societies.

On this occasion, the event focused on the challenges experienced by boys and young men, and highlighted

stories from inspirational role models at the community and national levels who have overcome some of these challenges. The event addressed key thematic issues including youth development and positive fatherhood, health and wellness, crime and violence prevention, and gender-based violence.

It was an opportunity to listen to practical examples and experiences from organizations, such as the Caribbean Male Action Network (CariMAN) and Men Against Violence Against Women (MAVAW), as well as to hear of initiatives, such as those developed by the Division of Gender Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

The event featured interactive presentations and booths from over 25 organizations, which showcased information and provided services that benefitted the community,

including free health checks and screening. There was also entertainment in the form of dances by DanceboxTT, Electric Breakers, skits by Roots Foundation, The Two Cents Movement and Ryu Dan Dojo Empowerment Youth Center. There were also motorcycle rides offered by New Millennium Knights, and special appearances by popular public personalities from T&T, including Voice, The Artiste, International Soca Monarch and Nigel Paul, the Olympic Boxer from Chaguanas.

For the occasion, ECLAC Caribbean partnered with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), other UN agencies, notably PAHO/WHO, UNFPA and the Resident Coordinator's Office, and several civil society organizations, including Ryu Dan Dojo Empowerment Youth Center, Mamatoto Centre, SISU Global Wellness, and the Network of rural women



## PARADE OF LIGHTS DAZZLE CAYMAN ISLAND HARBOUR

producers of Trinidad and Tobago.

The collaboration was inspired by previous successful partnerships in which ECLAC Caribbean was involved. These included the Women's City Village, held in Port of Spain to celebrate International Women's Day on 7 March 2018, and the World Population Day: Community Village event in Sangre Grande on 14 July 2018. ■

**T**he annual Cayman 27 Parade of lights competition took place recently, at the harbor front in Camana Bay, Grand Cayman. Over a dozen boats decorated with festive bulbs sailed past thousands of spectators, in the cool evening breeze comingled with and the calming sounds of the water.

In addition to the colour and lights from the boats, organizers lit up the sky with fireworks. The crowd was entertained with Christmas carols and songs, a visit from Santa, as well as music from local disc jockeys, Dr. Bob's Experiment, Daniela Shibli and VJ Marz.

The winner among the large boats was Captain David Simpson's Midnight Express, which featured giant "angel wings" of draped white lights and a Christmas angel. The small boat winner was Salt Shaker, captained by Mark Tarsh. ■

The event addressed key thematic issues including youth development and positive fatherhood, health and wellness, crime and violence prevention, and gender-based violence.





# FEATURE ARTICLE

ECLAC CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR  
PARTICIPATES IN GREEN CLIMATE  
FUND DIALOGUE



**T**he second Green Climate Fund (GCF) Structured Dialogue for the Caribbean, was held in Grenada from 6-9 November 2018, and provided an opportunity for reflection on progress and lessons learned. Some of the important areas for reflection included being ready to improve climate change risk management and resilience in the Caribbean; providing readiness support for engagement of CSOs in the Caribbean; and identifying financing mechanisms for the private sector, among other areas, to build partnerships and to explore new investment opportunities for both the public and private sectors.

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# ECLAC Caribbean Director participates in Green Climate Fund Dialogue

**A**ttending this important event was Director of ECLAC Caribbean, Diane Quarless, who used the opportunity to address both the Member States and officials of the GCF Secretariat on matters critical to the sustainable development of the Caribbean. Paramount among these was the debt burden and the ways to reduce it, by way of a Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap initiative. Quarless was accompanied by ECLAC Caribbean's Economic Development Unit Coordinator, Sheldon McLean.

Taking advantage of the opportunities for bilateral exchange with participants, Quarless recalled that following the 2008/2009 financial crisis, Caribbean member states did not have adequate fiscal buffers to sustain counter-cyclical measures. Thus, for them, the recession was much longer and deeper than

in other regions of the world; circumstances at the root of the subregion's current debt challenge.

"The traditional approach to debt management is to raise taxes, reduce government spending, strengthen fiscal accountability and hope for growth to pick up in an environment of reduced external demand.

Member states have by and large followed this approach, but many have had to seek several rounds of debt restructuring as growth has stalled," Quarless said.

She pointed out that in 2017, the total debt owed by the Caribbean was US \$56b, amounting to \$25b external, while domestic was US 31b. In the same year, the debt burden was 73.4% of GDP for the Caribbean. The Caribbean's external debt was 55.7% of the debt of Small Island

Developing States (SIDS). Quarless used the Structured Dialogue as an opportunity to further promote the ECLAC Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative as a strategy to tackle the crippling debt burden being shouldered by Caribbean states, while at the same time investing in climate resilience building.

In her elaboration of the debt swap initiative, Quarless pointed out that investment in green industries can contribute to economic growth and structural transformation while reducing the subregion's vulnerability to the impact of climate change. "The World Trade Organization (WTO) records world trade in green goods, technologies and services totalling some US \$1.4 trillion in 2014. In addition, trade in green products and services have more than doubled in the last decade, growing much faster

“

*Investment in green industries can contribute to economic growth and structural transformation...*

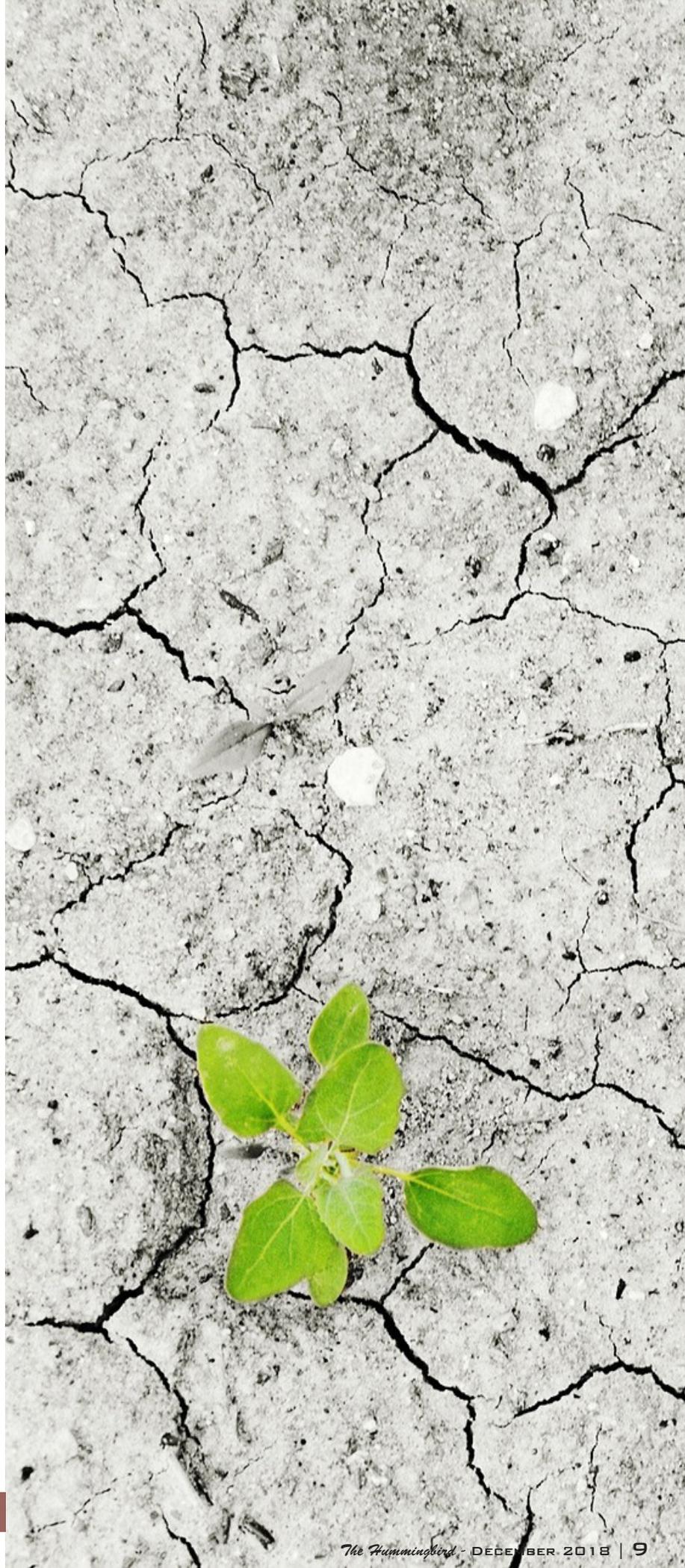
*Diane Quarless - Director of ECLAC Caribbean's Economic Development Unit*

”

than total world trade. This suggests that increased specialization in this segment is a good option for the Caribbean.”

During the Dialogue, a number of key undertakings were inaugurated. These included the signing of the Funded Activity Agreement (FAA) with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) for the implementation of the Water Sector Resilience Nexus for Sustainability project in Barbados; the REDD+ Readiness Preparation in Jamaica; and the Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA) with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

The GCF regularly holds Structured Dialogues in different regions of the world to share knowledge on how to optimally access GCF resources for public investment to pursue climate change adaptation and mitigation. ■





## ECLAC MEETING REVIEWS NEW STUDY ON RENEWABLE ENERGY AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

**E**nergy experts from across the Caribbean recently advanced several recommendations on how to improve the renewable energy and disaster resilience capacity of countries in the Caribbean. These include the strengthening of governance systems to enhance the role of energy in building resilience to disasters, providing financing for the adaptation of energy systems to climate change, and recognizing the importance of developing comprehensive disaster management strategies that harness the role of energy resilience in disaster risk reduction.

These recommendations were put forward during an expert group meeting convened by ECLAC Caribbean to review an upcoming study, entitled “The enhancement of resilience to disasters and climate change in the Caribbean through the modernization of the energy sector”. Preparation of this paper was led by Leda Peralta, Associate Environment Officer of the ECLAC Mexico office. The meeting took place in Port

of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago on 26 November 2018.

During the meeting, coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit, Dr. Omar Bello, explained that the study examines the role of energy systems in enhancing the resilience of Caribbean SIDS to disasters and climate change-related environmental changes. Bello briefly outlined ECLAC’s efforts in undertaking disaster assessments in Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular the countries that were impacted by the 2017 hurricane season. In this regard, he noted that the power sector had been the one most affected by hurricanes across the Caribbean.

Bello observed that although there are other studies that have examined the energy sector in the Caribbean, the upcoming ECLAC study would provide unique perspectives on the role of energy in bolstering the resilience of Caribbean countries to the impacts of disasters.

Also sharing an overview of the paper was ECLAC Caribbean’s Economic Affairs Officer, Willard Phillips, who cited the Caribbean’s high dependence on imported fossil energy, its notable socio-economic vulnerabilities, and the opportunities offered by renewable energy to modernize the subregion’s energy sector, and by extension enhance the resilience of these economies to disasters.

In the specific context of electricity, Phillips noted the need for modern and flexible grids which must be supported by regulations and guidelines. He explained that the Caribbean had old grids that required upgrading, but that such modernization was constrained by challenges, including financing, that hindered the transition to modernized grid systems.

The expert group meeting fostered robust dialogue among ECLAC’s team of experts from Chile, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago, and representatives from the



## INCREASING ACCESS TO INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY A PRIORITY IN CUBA, SAYS MINISTER

Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Officer of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM), Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), and CCRIF SPC (formerly the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility). ■

The study examines the role of energy systems in enhancing the resilience of Caribbean SIDS to disasters and climate change-related environmental changes.



**J**orge Luis Perdomo Di-Lella, Cuban minister of communications, recently stated that increasing internet access and technology is a priority for Cuba, where important steps are being taken in that direction. He noted that the fundamental evolution strategy lies in wireless technology and the development of mobile broadband.

In addition, Mayra Arevich Marín, executive president of the Cuban Telecommunications Company (ETECSA), has outlined examples of progress in the country, where there are currently 670 internet access rooms, six times the number in 2013.

She highlighted that Cubans also have access to 878 Wi-

Fi hotspots, distributed in all municipalities. She pointed out that another favourable aspect is the Nauta Hogar service, through which thousands of people connect from their homes, which allows them greater privacy.

During the last few years, Cuba has been considered one of the countries with more growth in the access to internet, in comparison with its situation in earlier times.

The number of people on social networks with devices such as cell phones and electronic tablets in the country is growing at a great pace. ■



## ECLAC ATTENDS 3RD MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE OF LATINA AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**W**ith increasing attention being paid to climate change, parliamentarians of Latin America and Caribbean countries gathered in Panama City from 4-5 October 2018 for the 3rd Meeting of the Parliamentary Network on Climate Change. Among countries represented at this gathering were Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Curaçao, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname.

This meeting, held under the joint auspices of Parlatino and ParlAmericas, was conducted in concurrent sessions. Representing ECLAC Caribbean was Willard Phillips, Economic Affairs Officer, who attended the meeting's session of the Commission on Energy and Mines of Latin America and Caribbean Parliaments. Phillips delivered a presentation titled 'Energy Integration in the Caribbean', which explored challenges and

opportunities for integration of energy resources among SIDS economies of the Caribbean. Among the main challenges identified in the presentations were the small populations and energy markets with related scale limitations, small and inefficient energy grids and limited energy regulatory infrastructure.

On the positive side however, the presentation noted the high renewable energy potential of the Caribbean as a major opportunity for the sub region, especially with its high solar, wind, and geothermal energy resources.

Mr. Phillips also participated in other sessions of the meeting, including a discussion on the fixing of carbon pricing in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as a discourse on Damages and losses in the Americas – beyond adaptation. ■



## ECLAC CONDUCTS FOLLOW-UP DISASTER TRAINING COURSES

**D**isaster preparedness and risk management have important implications, in the daily decisions made by people in a wide variety of contexts. With this in mind, ECLAC Caribbean recently joined forces with CCRIF SPC (Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company) to train on ECLAC's Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) methodology public officers from Anguilla, the Bahamas and the British Virgin Islands (BVI).

A team from ECLAC, led by the Coordinator of ECLAC Caribbean's Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit visited these countries during the past three months, to carry out the training courses. In the Bahamas, the training session was organized with additional support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The training courses were provided as a follow-up activity to disaster assessment missions carried out last year to quantify

the economic, social, and environmental effects and impacts of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in these countries. ECLAC Caribbean shared knowledge with national officers from these countries and territories, which will support their governments' future efforts to incorporate prevention, estimation, and risk reduction in public investment plans and development programs.

The DaLA methodology allows for the analysis of the effects of disasters in three separate sectors, namely the social, infrastructural and productive sectors. The global description of the disaster, the sectoral estimation of the damage, losses and additional costs and the estimations of the impacts in macroeconomic activities provide basic information to determine the resources needed to restore social and economic activities, as well as the required investments to ensure a resilient reconstruction process. ■



## JAMAICAN WINS X FACTOR UK

**J**amaican singer, Dalton Harris, has won the British reality television music competition, 'X Factor UK'. His performance of a duet of 'The Power of Love', with James Arthur in the finale at The Wembley Arena in London, sealed his victory and the winning prize of a prestigious £1 million (US\$1.3 million) recording contract with Sony-owned, Syco Music.

After being announced winner, the 24-year-old bent over with emotion before being congratulated by judge and mentor Louis Tomlinson, second placed winner Scarlett Lee and her mentor, judge Simon Cowell, even as the audience screamed and applauded. "Ohhhh!" he shouted before crouching, after the show's host Dermot O'Leary asked him how he was feeling.

Harris, who also won Digicel Rising Stars competition in 2010, was congratulated by Jamaica's

Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, and Opposition Leader, Dr. Peter Phillips, on social media.

Holness later said in a statement: "Dalton is a phenomenal talent who underscores the fact that Jamaica, though a small island developing state, produces some of the world's best talent in entertainment and culture. Dalton's victory, the first by a Jamaican on 'The X Factor' competition, and his history-making performances have placed him in a league of excellent entertainers." Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Olivia 'Babsy' Grange also acknowledged Harris' win as a "well-deserved victory for a young man with immense talent who works very hard".

Harris is the second Jamaican to win an international talent competition, following Tessanne Chin's victory in The Voice in 2013. ■

## SAMOA PATHWAY MEETING

### SPURS RENEWED ATTENTION THAT THE SIDS REMAIN A SPECIAL CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**T**he Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are constrained in meeting their goals in all three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. Amidst the negative impacts of climate change, increasing number and scale of disasters, and the impacts of global economic shocks on small economies, the SIDS are committed to strengthening their



efforts to achieve sustainable development.

The Caribbean actively participated in the mid-term review of the SIDS Sustainable Development platform: the SAMOA Pathway at a meeting held in Apia, Samoa from 30 October - 1 November 2018.

The SIDS Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the Midterm Review of the SAMOA Pathway, saw countries recommit to key priority areas including climate change mitigation, disaster risk reduction, the sustainable management of oceans and improved connectivity to name a few. The outcome of this meeting highlighted the priorities for all SIDS to be addressed over the next five years. Support for these priorities will be formalized at the High-level SIDS meeting to review implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, which will be

held in September 2019 at the UN headquarters in New York.

ECLAC Caribbean's Sustainable Development Officer, Artie Dubrie, attended the October meeting and used the opportunity to reaffirm ECLAC's commitment to support Caribbean SIDS and SDG aspirations at both national and regional levels.

Dubrie emphasized ECLAC's commitment to further improve the monitoring and accountability of the SAMOA Pathway, including through strengthening Regional and Sub-regional Coordinating Mechanisms, which will enable data generation, statistical analysis knowledge management, education, communication and outreach activities, to support the effective, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

About 250 representatives from the Small Island States of the UN, other member states, the private sector, civil society and the UN system participated in the meeting. ■

The outcome of this meeting highlighted the priorities for all SIDS to be addressed over the next five years.



# STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Belize

## CDB FUNDS COASTAL HIGHWAY UPGRADE

- Dec -

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) approved a loan of US \$36.6 million and a grant of £25 million to the government of Belize, to upgrade the country's Coastal Highway. The Sixth Road (Coastal Highway Upgrading) Project is also expected to improve climate resilience along the road. Currently, the highway is prone to flooding, as significant portions of it are low-lying. The investments are aimed at supporting bridge repairs and replacement, pavement upgrading and safety improvements.

## ROAD SAFETY PROJECT

- Dec -

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) approved funding of US \$5.9 million to the government of Belize to support critical efforts to improve road safety. Road traffic accidents are the seventh leading cause of death in Belize, with approximately 21 deaths per 100,000 persons: the highest fatality rate among the CDB's 19 borrowing member countries. This, Second Road Safety Project, builds on the results and lessons learned in a previous project in Belize, which focused on a demonstration corridor between Belmopan and Belize City.



Dominica

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FACILITY

- Dec -

In October of 2015, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the CDB jointly created the Sustainable Energy Facility (SEF), a US \$71.5 million loan and grant package. This same facility has now been expanded by the Inter-American Development Bank to contribute to the diversification of the energy matrix in five Eastern Caribbean Countries: Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. As a result of the SEF-Expanded programme, these five Caribbean countries will improve their energy security, promote their competitiveness, and enhance their fiscal and macro-economic stability.

## AIR BNB AGREEMENT

- Dec -

The Discover Dominica Authority and Airbnb have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to cooperate in making home sharing as an accommodation option in the Nature Island experience. The new partnership between Airbnb and Dominica comes on the heels of news that Airbnb and the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) have strengthened their regional partnership aimed at promoting tourism in the Caribbean. In recent years, Airbnb has signed collaboration or voluntary tax collection agreements with 14 countries in the region.



Saint Vincent And the Grenadines

## LEGAL MARIJUANA

- Dec -

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) has become the first Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) members to pass legislation allowing for the decriminalisation of marijuana for medicinal and scientific purposes. Speaking from SVG, Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Saboto Ceaser commented that the passing of the Bill in Parliament signifies the Caribbean island is now positioned to become a globally leading medicinal cannabis hub; not only in terms of high-quality production, but also research. This according to an OECS news release.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT

- Dec -

The board of directors of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) approved financing to the tune of US \$5.8 million for an energy-efficient street lighting project. Under the street and flood light retrofitting project, 10,650 street lights throughout Saint Kitts and Nevis will be replaced with more energy efficient light-emitting diode (LED) lamps. The government of Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Saint Kitts Electricity Company (SKELEC) and the Nevis Electricity Company (NEVLEC) are also expected to contribute approximately US \$700,000 to the project.



Photo: (from left) Chief of ECLAC Caribbean's Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit, Omar Bello; Speaker of the House of the Assembly, Dr Jennifer Geerlings-Simons; and ECLAC Associate Public Information Officer Felix Ibañez.

## ECLAC CONTRIBUTES TO DISCUSSION AT THE REGIONAL SEMINAR ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Organized by the National Assembly of Suriname and the Inter Parliamentary Union, the Regional Seminar on climate change and disaster risk reduction for Parliaments of the Caribbean took place in Paramaribo, Suriname on 5 - 6 November 2018. Representatives of 10 Caribbean countries and territories were in attendance, including the Speakers of the Parliaments of Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname and parliamentarians from Cuba, Jamaica and Saint Lucia.

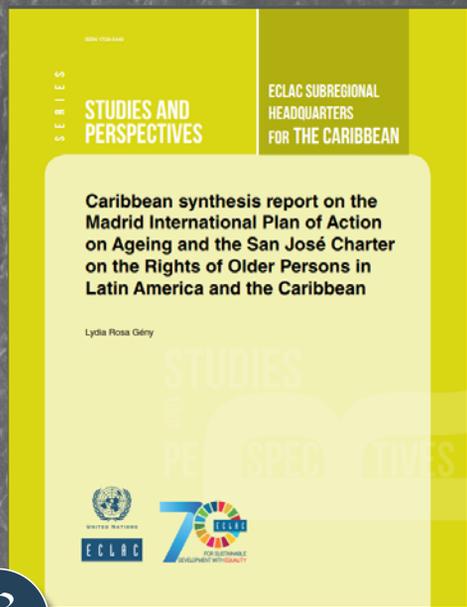
ECLAC was represented by Dr. Omar Bello, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit of the Subregional Headquarters of the Caribbean, and by Mr. David Barrio, Environmental Affairs Officer of ECLAC, Santiago. Dr. Bello discussed the importance of planning for resilience, stated that in the Caribbean disaster risk reduction policies are strongly related to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. Mr. Barrio explained the importance of the Escazu Agreement as a key instrument for climate action and governance in the region, and took the opportunity to emphasize the role of parliamentarians in the domestic ratification process and their responsibility in translating regional commitments into national law and policies.

The meeting concluded with the signing of the Paramaribo Declaration. The Declaration affirms a bold commitment by parliamentarians of the Caribbean to take further action to address climate change and implement more effective disaster risk reduction policies. Participants agreed that national plans and policies need to be developed in consultation with citizens, and that legislation should take into account the specific national conditions and circumstances while ensuring strict respect for human rights. They also recognized that the parliaments of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean and other regions have to form a strong coalition in order to receive greater interest from the international community. ■



1.

Advancing the economic empowerment and autonomy of women in the Caribbean through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



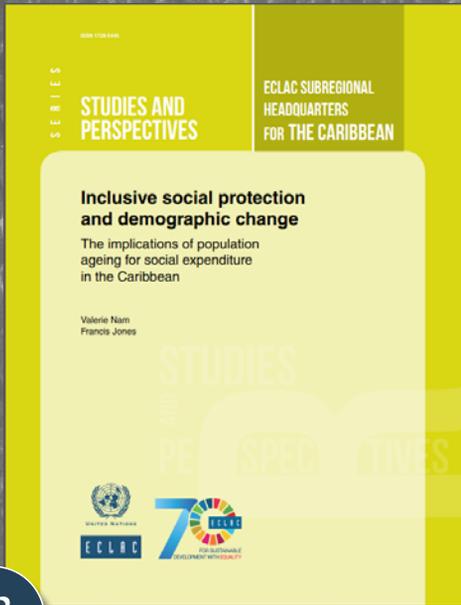
3.

Caribbean synthesis report on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean

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2.

## DIANE'S CORNER

The Director's views and thoughts on the occasion of:



**DIANE QUARLESS**  
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

26/11



### International day for the elimination of violence against women

In 2017, at least 2,795 women were murdered, in 23 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean. Their crime? Nothing more than that they were women. Four countries accounted for a total of 35 femicide victims in 2017: Belize, the British Virgin Islands, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. These data reflect but one part of the most egregious expression of violence that the Caribbean women and girls of our subregion are still subject to every day. The time for change is now!

#DirectorsTake

<http://vrb.al/directors-take>





# UNIQUE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FROM ACROSS THE CARIBBEAN

**T**here is nothing like Christmas in the Caribbean. The Hummingbird is pleased to share a taste of some of the most characteristic Christmas traditions from islands across the region.

## THE BAHAMAS

One of the Bahamas' most treasured and well-known traditions is Junkanoo on boxing day, the day after Christmas, where masked revelers sing, dance, and drum their way through town streets in an exuberant parade.

## THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

For those living outside the cities in the Dominican Republic, groups of singers stroll through the neighborhood singing traditional Dominican folk songs about Christmas.

## GRENADA

Every year, the Carriacou Parang Festival is held the weekend before Christmas. Free open-air concerts feature parang bands (calypso-like music using drums, maracas, mandolins, guitars, tambourines and more) from throughout Grenada. After the daytime celebrations, the parang bands go house-to-house playing carols and entertaining neighbours well into the night.

## GUADELOUPE

Midnight Mass is obligatory for the religious, and the French tradition of a réveillon, or a late-night meal, is the norm for many in this Caribbean-French département. Pork is the centerpiece of the Christmas meal in Guadeloupe. Ham has the place of pride at the table,

but is often a fresh ham that is closer to roast pork. Riz aux pois Congo, or rice with Congo peas, is another standby, but at times is replaced with riz aux yeux noire — black-eyed peas and rice. There is also the shrubb beverage, prepared from local rum infused with sweet spices like cinnamon and clove and further perfumed with macerated clementine peels.

## GUYANA

Christmas in Guyana used to feature masqueraders going door to door wearing ghost-like costumes and dancing for money. Costumes included Long-lady – nicknamed Boom Boom Sally or Mother Sally – a figure in a flowing skirt on tall stilts and with the face of a woman and the Cow, a wood-and-fabric structure in the shape of a cow that had an opening for a man to place it around him. One of the popular chants was: "Christmas come but once a year. And every man must have his share. But the poor man in the jail. Drinking sour ginger beer." The food preparation in Guyana starts way before the day for black cake, ginger beer and garlic pork. Other special items include pepperpot, which is a must on Christmas morning.

## HAITI

Traditionally, a few days before Christmas, Haitians would cut pine branches to serve as Christmas trees or they would go to the market and get freshly cut trees brought from the mountains. At the base of the Christmas tree, they would add a fairly large nativity scene which could occupy a large part of the living room. They

depicted a cave manger, with Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, the wise men, and sculptured stable animals complete with hay. On Christmas Eve, the children would place their shoes, nicely cleaned up and filled with straw, on the porch or under the Christmas tree for Papa Noel (Santa Claus) to remove the straw and put his presents in and around the shoes. Many Haitians drink anisette on Christmas Eve which is a mild alcoholic beverage prepared by soaking "anise" leaves in rum and sweetening it with sugar.

## JAMAICA

Jamaicans celebrate Christmas by going to church, exchanging gifts with their families, and gathering for a large meal. Dinner on Christmas day, the biggest feast for Jamaicans, includes chicken, oxtail, curry goat, roast ham, and rice and gungo peas - a Christmas specialty for Jamaica, which usually ripen in December. Throughout the rest of the year, cooks use red peas with the rice. Jamaicans also prepare roast beef and/or pork. Another holiday specialty is Jamaican-style Christmas cake, made of fruit soaked in rum. The drink of choice for Jamaicans during the Christmas season is sorrel. Made from dried sorrel, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, sugar, orange peel, and rum, the beverage is usually served over ice. The music of the season reflects local culture, so it's not surprising that reggae Christmas carols add a Jamaican twist to old favorites.

## MARTINIQUE

The Christmas season lasts longest for this French island, which continues to celebrate until Three Kings' Day on



January 6, commemorating “les Rois” or the coming of the Three Wise Men. This is the day when most people everywhere take down their Christmas trees.

#### **MONTSERRAT**

A number of celebrations converge around Christmas time in Montserrat including house-to-house caroling, masquerade competitions (including Moko Jumbie, “bull man” etc) and a Miss Montserrat show. The traditional fare at Christmastime is roast pig, goat water (stewed goat meat), goat meat cooked on a wood fire, potato pudding and dooknah.

#### **PUERTO RICO**

In Puerto Rico, you’ll hear American carols, “Feliz Navidad” by Jose Feliciano and the traditional posada song early in the month. In homes, kitchen tables are cleared and women gather to form the assembly lines that will prepare dozens of pastelles. The men must make the local lechonera, while the traditional suckling pigs are slow-roasted over hardwood fires. Blood-sausage morcilla is prepared from the pig’s innards and served with arroz con gandules — rice and pigeon peas, fragrant with annatto and seasoned with cooking ham. The meal is finished off with small glasses of coquito, the Puerto Rican eggnog that comes in seemingly endless variants.

#### **SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS**

Saint Kitts has a carnival over the Christmas holidays – one huge party with music and dancing in the streets. It features calypso, steel bands, the big drum and fife corps, masquerade and children’s dancing troupes, the Bull,

Moko Jumbies, clowns and string bands. Festive foods include black pudding, goat water, conchs, Johnny cakes, and roti. There are also competitions such as the Queen Show, the Calypso Monarch Competition and the Caribbean Talented Teen Competition.

#### **SAINT LUCIA**

Saint Lucians celebrate the holiday season with a burst! Many young boys fashion bamboo stalks into homemade cannons using kerosene, sticks, and a bottle lamp, and compete with one another to get the loudest explosions. There is also the Festival of Lights and Renewal, which begins on 13 December, and features a lantern-making competition and the decoration of towns and villages with lights. The celebration honours the patron saint of light, Saint Lucy, with a switching on of the Christmas lights and a lantern-making competition.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Nationals of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines celebrate the annual Nine Mornings Festival each Christmas. Every morning starting nine days before Christmas, locals wake up before dawn and fill the streets to participate in a range of celebratory activities, from sea baths to costumed dances and bicycle rides.

#### **SURINAME**

In Suriname, Christmas begins early. Children put out cookies and milk for Goedoe Pa (or Dearest Daddy) and his servants who would be busy delivering gifts throughout the country. Goedoe Pa is a black man and his servants are

also black. He and his servants leave the children’s presents next to their shoes on the morning of December 6th, with poems attached to the gifts. Surinamese celebrate Christmas Day and the following day, December 26th, called Tweede Kerstdag.

#### **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

Parang is also a festival held at Christmas time in Trinidad. The instruments used by parang bands include the bass drum, iron, guitar, quarto, violin, maracas (shack – shack), mandolin, saxophone, tambourine. Songs use calypso-like themes. Christmas music now also includes Parang Soca (introduced around 1978), a blend of soca music and parang. Trinidad’s Christmas cuisine include the usual Caribbean favorites, but also pastelles (cornmeal pasties filled with meat, olives, capers and raisins, steamed in banana leaves) and stewed pigeon peas. Ponche de creme (eggnog with added rum) is also very popular. ■

# ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

## ECLAC STAFF COORDINATES FLOOD RELIEF DRIVE FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**S**everal areas of Trinidad and Tobago were affected by severe flooding during the second half of October this year. Thousands of people lost most of their belongings, including furniture, vehicles, pets and personal items.

The ECLAC Caribbean Staff Association, responding to the clear need to assist the affected population, quickly organized a flood relief drive, in collaboration with other UN agencies in the country, to offer relief to the flood victims.

Staff gave donations of cash, food supplies, household items and clothing. ECLAC staff volunteered their time to source and purchase some necessary items, including table-top stoves, pots and pans, dishes, cutlery, bedsheets and towels, as well as food supplies. These items were delivered to our designated NGO counterpart, the Felicity Community Relief Group, in early November for distribution.

Here are some photos from our flood relief drive. ■





# Traditional Christmas Ponche De Crème

## What you will need:

6 eggs  
4 cups evaporated milk  
1 cup sweetened condensed milk  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar  
2 cups golden rum or 1 cup puncheon  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon grated nutmeg  
1 teaspoon minced lime zest  
1 teaspoon aromatic bitters

## What you need to do:

1. In a medium stainless steel bowl beat eggs with sugar, place into a double boiler, and over simmering water cook eggs until thick and sugar has dissolved. Do not heat the eggs directly to prevent cooking.
2. Remove the mixture from the heat.
3. Add condensed milk, evaporated milk and alcohol. Combine the mixture well.
4. Add lime zest, aromatic bitters and nutmeg stirring continuously.
5. Store in glass bottles and refrigerate until ready for use.
6. Serve with crushed ice

# Sorrel drink

## What you will need:

1 lb. sorrel  
11 cups water  
1 cup sugar  
5 cloves

## What you need to do:

1. Clean the sorrel to remove any old leaves.
2. Separate the sepals from the seed by cutting a round circle just below the 'spines'.  
Note: Don't touch the seeds with your bare hands! There are some fine 'hairs' that will penetrate the skin and makes for a rather uncomfortable experience.
3. Wash thoroughly but not too vigorously.
4. Place all ingredients except sugar in a tall pot. This is important as the mixture tends to froth and bubble up.
5. Boil for approx 20 minutes or until the sepals looks whiteish.
6. Strain the mixture and add sugar to taste before it cools.
7. Cool mixture and enjoy a glass before bottling the rest!



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## SOCIAL MEDIA



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