



# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

REGIONAL AGENDA FOR  
INCLUSIVE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ADOPTED AT ECLAC MEETING

# SARGASSUM

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF  
SARGASSUM ON CARIBBEAN  
ECONOMIES

# I AM A YOUTH

I AM A YOUTH OF A SMALL ISLAND  
COMPETITION RESULTS



ECLAC



# CONTENTS



Cover Image by Denisse Aylene González Baez from the 'I am a Youth of a Small Island' competition.

- 4** **Article**  
Hurricane Dorian's impact on the Bahamas – an ECLAC assessment
- 8** **Feature Article**  
Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development adopted at ECLAC meeting
- 12** **Article**  
I am a Youth of a Small Island Competition Results
- 16** **Article**  
Caribbean Youth Day 2019
- 18** **Article**  
The Caribbean commits to a pollution-free future
- 21** **ECLAC Caribbean Family**  
United Nations Day - Staff Lunch

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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Events

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More



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11

Seminar for Public Officials and Civil Society Representatives on Escazú Agreement and 2030 Agenda  
11 November 2019

14

World Diabetes Day  
14 November 2019

20

World Children's Day  
20 November 2019

24

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women  
25 November 2019

29

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People  
29 November 2019



**ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Oct 7

Congratulations to Josiah Julipsingh, Caribbean winner of the 'I am a youth of a SIDS' competition in the category: 'photos and paintings, 15-19 years of age'.



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**ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Nov 7

Congratulations to Denisse Aylén González Baez, Caribbean winner of the 'I am a youth of a SIDS' competition in the category: 'photos and paintings, 20-24 years of age'.



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**ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Nov 1

The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, has launched the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance. More info here: <http://bit.ly/2EeZhW5>



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## HURRICANE DORIAN'S IMPACT ON THE BAHAMAS – AN ECLAC ASSESSMENT

**A**fter a quiet 2018 Atlantic hurricane season, in September 2019, hurricane Dorian, made landfall in the Bahamas, becoming the strongest hurricane on record to impact its islands.

Historically, the Bahamas has suffered the impact of severe storms almost every year but Dorian, however, stands out with a level of destruction both unexpected and unprecedented.

On 1 September, the eye of hurricane Dorian made landfall on Abaco Island with maximum sustained winds of 185 mph and storm surges of 20 to 25 ft. A Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) team of external experts and ECLAC staff, led by Dr. Omar Bello, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit at the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Port of Spain, assessed the impact on Abaco and Grand Bahama.

In Marsh Harbour, Abaco social and economic center, the near complete destruction of infrastructure and housing was hard to describe even for the experts who participated in previous DaLA missions. Perhaps a good description is offered by the international military personnel working in the island, who compared the landscape to a post-conflict zone. As the eye of Dorian moved over the eastern side of Grand Bahama on



Damage and Loss Assessment Team from ECLAC and the InterAmerican Development Bank

2 September and stalled there for another day as a Category 5 hurricane, the storm surge and flooding caused considerable damage. Overall, Dorian deposited an estimated 3 ft of rain over the Bahamas

In Eastern Grand Bahama the destruction from Dorian was also severe. Preliminary estimates of the total costs range in the billions. Houses, roads, government and commercial buildings, transport, power and telecommunications infrastructure, entire ecosystems, ground water-resources and coastlines have been impacted and will require major investments to be recovered.

The costs of restoring an entire town reduced to debris in the case of Marsh Harbour and cleaning the oil

spill in the Equinor facility in eastern Grand Bahama are, in themselves, substantial undertakings. The economy and livelihoods will also be impacted in the coming years by the interruption of economic flows that arise from the temporary absence of damaged assets, especially those of tourism and fisheries. The scientific evidence suggests that as ocean water temperatures continue to rise, they will likely fuel increasingly stronger tropical cyclones.

The Bahamas will have to face a difficult challenge in coming years concerning relocation of coastal populations and infrastructure. Likewise, it will be necessary to rethink existing strategies to better use scarce financial, technical and institutional resources to guarantee a resilient development path.





## CARIBBEAN ADOPTS REMOTE SENSING TO PREPARE FOR HURRICANES

While the Atlantic Hurricane season is a time of anxious preparation for countries in the Caribbean, for ECLAC Caribbean, it has become a time to prepare and adapt the work agenda. Assessing damage, losses, and additional cost has been part of ECLAC's history since the inception of the DaLA methodology in the early 1970s. In the Bahamas, the consecutive DaLA assessments — jointly organized with the Interamerican Development Bank - of Hurricanes Matthew, Joaquin, Irma, and now Dorian, offer evidence of the cumulative effects and impacts on the economy, infrastructure and society and provide guidance for planning reconstruction.

DaLA reports have been used not only to assist governments in better allocating limited resources and efficiently planning for resilient reconstruction but also to sensitize the international community of the impact of extreme climatic events, the high costs of reconstruction and to mobilize support.

DaLA findings from the region reveals that achieving disaster and climate resilient communities in the Caribbean will demand rethinking the development path, considering the location of settlements, redesigning infrastructure, and strengthening environmental protection as a primary protective barrier against natural hazards. ■

**T**he Caribbean is currently deploying a new technology to help it build resilience to natural disasters. Known as LIDAR, the acronym for light detection and ranging, the technology is being used to gather data that will help regional authorities better predict the impacts of climate-related events and determine how best to prepare for them. One of the organizations using LIDAR for data collection is the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR) in the Caribbean, funded by the Climate Investment Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank. In 2012, LIDAR was effectively used in the United States in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

The PPCR-Caribbean's programme manager, Ainsley Henry, said that the technology might even have prepared the Bahamas to better cope with Hurricane Dorian which struck the island chain on 1 September 2019. The Category 5 Dorian was one of the most destructive Atlantic hurricanes on record, causing more than 60 deaths, storm surges more than 20 feet high, and mass evacuations in the Bahamas. Though the Bahamas is not part of the PPCR-Caribbean project, LIDAR mapping is increasingly being used by organizations to strengthen the Caribbean's climate resilience, according to Henry. He added that the technology could change the way hurricanes affect the region and some of the challenges involved in using it. ■



# Regional Agenda for INCLUSIVE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

adopted at ECLAC meeting

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**A** Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development was adopted recently in Mexico by authorities participating in the Third Meeting of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. This Agenda is a technical and political instrument that will contribute to eradicating poverty and achieving greater levels of equality in the region.

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# Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development adopted at ECLAC meeting

The Regional Agenda highlights a shared position among countries by promoting a new generation of social policies anchored in a rights - and equality-based approach, as well as guided by the principle of universalism that also recognizes differences and realities at the national level. The Agenda aims to enhance countries' capacity to invest in social issues, to provide sufficient resources for social policies, and to bolster multilateral action and cooperation.

According to ECLAC, 30.1% of the region's population was below the

poverty line in 2018, while 10.7% lived in situations of extreme poverty – rates which are seen rising to 30.8% and 11.5%, respectively, in 2019, according to ECLAC's projections in the Social Panorama of Latin America 2019. More specifically in the Caribbean, where reasonably comparable data are available, rates of indigence have been falling and, in some countries, indigence rates are 3 per cent or lower. Exceptions to this include Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname where a sizeable proportion of the population continue to live in extreme poverty.

Progress in the reduction of poverty has however been slower and there is a paucity of data on levels of poverty and inequality in Caribbean countries since around 2010 to identify trends in the subregion.\*

At the Conference's closing session, ECLAC's Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, stated that "Latin America and the Caribbean has to show the world that it has a deep commitment to social development by fighting against inequality, poverty and extreme poverty, despite the economic, political and social problems,



Attendees of the Third Meeting of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.





*The very survival of the highly vulnerable States of the Caribbean and their ability to achieve sustainable development and to offer social protection to every citizen will depend on the success of the strategies to build social, economic and environmental resilience...*

Diane Quarless - Director, ECLAC Caribbean



obstacles and dilemmas that we are experiencing. We cannot let our guard down because the economy is imposing very severe restrictions on us. Social programs must continue to be a priority for the countries of our region."

In an earlier statement during the Caribbean panel focused on challenges and opportunities of the Regional Agenda in the subregion, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, stated that discussions on the Regional Agenda were timely and relevant, as they will give life and fullest expression to the commitment made to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of all. "The very survival of the highly vulnerable States of the Caribbean and their ability to achieve sustainable development and to offer social protection to every citizen will depend on the success of the strategies to build social, economic and environmental resilience," she said.

Quarless also said that "the Regional Agenda is a strategy to operationalize Agenda 2030, because it is grounded in a people-centred approach to development, it promotes equality and recognizes and honors the intrinsic value of every human life. It is a strategy that is intended to integrate in the broader goals the unique circumstances of the subregion. It is this effort to respond directly to the special needs of the people of the subregion that we

celebrate this new agenda for the region."

The Honorable Samantha Marshall, Minister of Social Transportation, Human Resource Development, Youth and Gender Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda; the Honorable Cynthia Y. Forde, Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs of Barbados; the Honorable Frederick A. Stephenson, Minister of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Ms. Anita Bianca Forst-Cumberbatch, Deputy Director of General Social Care in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing of Suriname; and Mr. Vishal Hulbert Joseph, CARICOM Youth Ambassador of Guyana and Regional Focal Point for the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth shared their perspectives during the Caribbean panel.

At this regional gathering, country delegates analyzed ECLAC's document, 'Critical obstacles to inclusive social development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Background for a regional agenda', which identifies at least eight key factors impeding the achievement of inclusive social development in the region. These include the persistence of poverty, structural inequalities, the deficit of decent work and social protection, insufficient social investment, diverse forms of violence,

and disasters and climate change. Participants also commended the Commission on the launch of the Observatory on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, being a regional public good for supporting the design and implementation of public policies and monitoring their trends in the region.

At the meeting, the new members of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean were elected, including for the first time, Barbados and the British Virgin Islands.

Participants at the conference included 102 representatives of 29 countries and 40 delegates from 13 United Nations agencies and international organizations. Representatives of 18 civil society institutions also attended along with members of academia and the private sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. ■

\* ECLAC, Implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development in the Caribbean- A review of the period 2013-2018, p.11.



## ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SARGASSUM ON CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES

**S**ince 2011, the Caribbean sub-region has been experiencing a significant upsurge in pelagic Sargassum seaweed (Sargassum species), which has generated considerable negative economic, social and environmental impacts. Although there has been no consensus on the cause of this dramatic increase in algal blooms, researchers have identified the increased flow of land based pollutants such as organic fertilizers into the Atlantic Ocean, as well as increased sea surface temperatures due to climate change as the two most likely causes.

While sargassum presence may be described as benign due to the slow onset of its effects, it causes major impacts to tourism, as it despoils beaches and coastal areas which are major attractions for visitors to many Caribbean countries. Moreover, it affects fisheries through damage to boats, engines and fishing gear as well as by its obstructing movement in and out of fishing bays, thereby also disrupting coastal transportation.

Another peculiarity of sargassum is its production of large quantities of noxious and toxic gasses - hydrogen sulphide and ammonia - during its subsequent decay after beaching.

These fumes generate significant public health effects, such as respiratory problems and skin rashes among those who come into contact with it.

Additionally, high ambient concentrations of these gases have been reported to contribute to extensive corrosion of both building fixtures such as doors and window, and the failure of household appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, air-conditioning units, and electronics such as televisions and computers. Sargassum has also been identified to have some impacts on the energy sector, where these gases also cause damage to electrical transmission and distribution infrastructure on the coast.

ECLAC Caribbean recently initiated a scoping study to assess the extent of possible impacts of sargassum on Caribbean economies. This study will inform the design and methodology for a more robust economic analysis of the potential impacts of sargassum on the Caribbean.

As part of the study, visits were undertaken to four Caribbean countries (Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia, Barbados, and Guadeloupe) during the month of October 2019,

in order to meet with stakeholders and to obtain first-hand information on both challenges and efforts in confronting this menace. Field visits and interviews were conducted with representatives from state and municipal agencies, the tourism sector, fisherfolk and other private sector interests.

This study will also enable ECLAC to determine how it may adapt and apply its Damage and Loss Assessment Methodology (DaLA) - designed for economic assessment of natural events - to the evaluation of what has been described by some countries as an ecological emergency.

ECLAC Caribbean's work is part of a wider regional effort among several Caribbean governments and agencies to develop strategies for dealing with the regional sargassum threat. Such efforts recently culminated with the hosting of an International Conference and Exposition on Sargassum, by the government of France and the Guadeloupe Region.

The conference drew experts from countries around the Caribbean Basin, in addition to research and development partners from the US, Brazil, Mexico, the OECS, CARICOM, EU, United Nations, and several





## T&T FARMERS WIN COCOA AWARDS

regional universities.

ECLAC was represented at this conference by Artie Dubrie, Sustainable Development Officer, and Willard Phillips, Economic Affairs Officer of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit. During the event, Dubrie contributed to the proceedings through her participation in the drafting of the final declaration in the sustainable management of Sargassum in the Caribbean Region. Phillips also participated in a roundtable which discussed environmental, health, sociological and economic impacts of sargassum.

Among the key lessons that are already apparent from this scoping exercise and the International Conference is the uncertainty of the occurrence of sargassum impacts, as well as the range of ecosystem services which can be affected by the appearance of sargassum. These factors are likely to be important in the future investigation of the possible impact of sargassum on Caribbean economies. ■

**T**rinidad and Tobago Cocoa farmers, Geeta and Leroy Peters from Grand Riviere, Jacqueline and Martin Matthew from Tamana, recently won the International Cocoa Awards (ICA) at the 25th edition of Salon du Chocolat in Paris, France. According to a statement by the Cocoa Development Company of T&T, the International Cocoa Awards, held every two years, is coordinated through the Cocoa of Excellence Programme, spearheaded by Biodiversity International. The awards recognize quality, flavour and diversity of cocoa according to their origin.

The T&T farmers placed first out of 223 entries from 55 countries. A third submission by Jacinta and Michael Milne of Bethany Estate, Talparo, was ranked among the world's top 50. The Peters won the inaugural National Cocoa Awards, held earlier this year in the Southern Academy of Performing Arts (SAPA), following which they were sent to Paris to network with international artisan chocolatiers and cocoa buyers.

The Cocoa Development Company said the Peters received the International Cocoa Awards for the region of Central America and

Caribbean. Their chocolate was described by judges as having "very fruity flavours, like orange and a bit of lemon, also some exotic fruits as mango, that bonds all the qualities of the cocoa along with little acidity". Jacqueline and Martin Matthew, of Tamana, also won an Award for their cocoa beans.

The Cocoa of Excellence Programme is the entry point for cocoa-producing countries to participate in the international awards. T&T's cocoa producers were chosen out of the National Cocoa Award for Quality programme which concluded in February 2019.

This is the first time the Cocoa Development Company exhibited a national booth at the Salon du Chocolat to showcase T&T's cocoa beans and locally produced chocolates.

"We are connecting T&T cocoa producers to international artisan chocolatiers, niche chocolate makers and cocoa buyers, thus strengthening our linkages to global markets, and empowering the cocoa farmers of T&T," the Cocoa Development Company noted. ■

# I AM A YOUTH OF A SMALL ISLAND!

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION  
OPEN TO YOUTH AGES 15 - 24



In August, ECLAC Caribbean, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and other UN Partners, launched an international competition to mark the mid-term review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway).

Entitled 'I am a youth of a small island', the competition was announced in June 2019 and was open to Youth from SIDS ages 15-24. Submissions had to reflect the reality of the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) as a special case for sustainable development. The interpretation was from such angles as: economic, social, cultural, environmental or any combination of these.

In keeping with the theme of sustainable development for the SIDS, the interpretation also was to include the view of visioning for the future when today's youth will become adults. The submissions had to be creative, excite the viewer and keep their attention with originality and innovativeness.

Entries for the contest were submitted by 5 August of 2019 in the form of: essays, photography, visual arts, video, poetry or musical.

The Hummingbird is now pleased to share with its readers the winning entries for each of the above-mentioned categories which, in no particular order, are as follows:

## Poems

- "To Those Who Haven't Visited My Island"  
Khadijah Ashanna Halliday, Age: 17, Country: Saint Lucia
- "I See" "I am a girl of a small island"  
Jordan R. Hewitt, Age: 15, Country: Jamaica
- "I am a youth of a Small Island"  
Vinzealhar Nen, Age: 23, Country: Papua New Guinea
- "Damsel in Distress"  
Safiya Moore, Age: 24, Country: Trinidad and Tobago
- "What Is"  
Brittney Garbutt Age: 24, Country: Belize

## Essay

- "I am a Youth of a Small Island  
Brittney Garbutt Age: 24 Country: Belize
- "I Could Not Breath"  
Brittney Garbutt Age: 24, Country: Belize
- "The Reality of the SIDS as a Special Case for Sustainable Development: The Butterfly Effect"  
Brittney Garbutt, Age: 24, Country: Belize

## Other Written Entries

- Creative Essay "Under the Tongan Ngatu"  
Sisifa Gigi Lui, Age: 20, Country: Tonga
- Creative letters "Dear SIDS"  
Shaunee Richards, Age: 21, Country: Trinidad and Tobago





## BARBUDA HOSTS FIRST OCEAN FESTIVAL

### Paintings

- "A Girl An Ocean"

Aishath Saba, Age: 19, Country: Maldives

### Song

- Song by FENTY

Paulanna Fenty , Age 21: Barbados

### Video

- By LLEWELLYN

Phillip Llewellyn, Age 20, Jamaica

- By FILIPE GAMA

Joas Elias Gama, Age 23, Country Timor-Leste

For those interested in finding out more about the creative brilliance of these pieces of art, all winning entries can be found at [www.facebook.com/eclaccaribbean](https://www.facebook.com/eclaccaribbean) and United Nations Sustainable Development web site at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.org>.

The weather was hot and so were the grills, when Barbuda hosted its first ever Ocean Festival a few weeks ago. The Festival was a collaboration between the Waitt Institute's Blue Halo Foundation, the Barbuda Fisheries Division and the non-governmental organisation, BarbudaGO.

The event was hosted as a fun way to promote fishing regulations and compliance on the island.

Robin Ramdeen, Site Manager for Blue Halo, said she was pleased with the day's turnout. "We got the message out there. There was already that pride about them, that living here in Barbuda means living near the ocean and taking care of it because you rely on it for your bread and butter every day."

She listed the preparations that went into the event, explaining that, "we printed the t-shirts with the local regulations on them. We decided we would do trivia and giveaways and make it fun to bring people out, to get the community involved in their lagoon and their ocean and what better way to do that like doing things they love to do like swimming and eating seafood.

"We invited some of the well-known chefs around the island, local people, to come and grill-off with lobster, which is in season now, conch which is in season now and fish as well," Ramdeen said.

Among the events was a swimming competition and a very scrumptious grill-off, buttressed by the high spirits of the children and the adults who participated and showed support for the activities. ■



## BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) can break down many of the barriers that prevent persons with disabilities (PWDs) from participating actively in society and enjoying their right to equal access to ICTs. This argument was the cornerstone of a recent expert group meeting (EGM), during which policy makers and experts discussed the findings of an ECLAC Caribbean study entitled “Using Universal Service Funds to increase access to technology for Persons with Disabilities”.

While ongoing advances in ICTs make digital literacy a prerequisite for employment and educational opportunities, access to and use of the internet and other ICTs is not evenly enjoyed, and many groups experience a digital divide, including PWDs. In the Caribbean, this is particularly worrisome, given that there are approximately 1.3 million persons with a disability of some kind and around 250,000 persons with a significant disability.

Universal service funds (USFs) are a valuable mechanism that can be used to finance measures to ensure ICT access to PWDs. There are presently

10 Universal Service Funds (USFs) in the subregion, with a further ten countries having legislation that would enable the establishment of a USF. Historically however, USFs have faced challenges ranging from high levels of undisbursed funds to low levels of transparency and mismanagement.

These shortcomings have engendered a cautious approach to USF adoption for improving access to ICTs for persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups. However, new opportunities for increasing the effectiveness of USFs were discussed by key stakeholders at the meeting. Participants also provided feedback on the findings of the study, offered perspectives on its conclusions and recommendations, and identified best practices for countries wishing to establish or improve the efficacy of an existing USF.

In particular, experts and policy makers highlighted the importance of updating USF legislation in the region, in order to allow USFs to deliver both universal service and access to telecommunications, to adopt an inclusive definition of disability in keeping with the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to include technologically-neutral language that enables them to fund projects for new technologies. Furthermore, USFs should use public awareness campaigns to increase PWDs’ knowledge of USFs and the availability of funding. PWDs would also benefit from trainings and other support to build capacity to submit project proposals.

Participants included people with disabilities and their representative organisations, representatives from USFs, telecommunications departments and regulatory bodies from a number of Caribbean countries as well as from regional telecommunications organisations, including the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU). ■





## INTEREST IS GROWING IN COMMERCIAL USE OF V.I. BREADFRUIT

**S**purred by Mutiny Island Vodka's breadfruit spirit that's produced on St. Croix, commercial interest in the nutritious, bulbous food has been growing across the Virgin Islands. The buzz is partially driven by the increasing demand for gluten-free foods worldwide, as well as the rising interest in specialty foodstuff items. From value-added food products, such as pastas, chips and baking mixes, to spirits, cosmetics and bug repellent, the edible and nonedible uses of breadfruit are making their way to the global market.

But breadfruit's nutritional and cultural importance has been recognized for millennia. "Breadfruit is considered a staple in the Caribbean, sometimes consumed more frequently in areas than even rice," explained Chenzira Davis-Kahina, director of the Virgin Islands and Caribbean Cultural Center and member of the Global Breadfruit Heritage Council. "Native ancestral Virgin Islanders have long been aware of the benefits, longevity and multiple uses of breadfruit."

It's not the first time local farmers have heard of the crop either. Increased commercial interest, however, has some

following the market for breadfruit more closely. Many farmers are keen to plant more breadfruit trees on their land and potentially grow the market for what is seen as a potential commodity crop for the island of St. Croix.

Nate Olive, director of Ridge to Reef Farm on St. Croix, is leading an alliance of V.I. farmers, nonprofits and agriculture extension professionals to distribute breadfruit trees to support economic development for farmers. Over the last year, R2R helped distribute and plant nearly 2,000 trees as part of their goal to plant 10,000 breadfruit trees over five years. The large majority of the trees went to farmers and residents.

Chef Todd Manley, restaurateur and owner and founder of Mutiny Island Vodka, said that he is often approached by enthusiastic residents looking to sell breadfruit from their backyard trees. "I'll use [the fruit] in the restaurant, but I think what people don't realize is that for us to make the vodka we use 5,400 pounds of breadfruit at a time," Manley said. This much breadfruit can make a run of more than 10,000 bottles at Mutiny's distillery, which currently employs 12 people in the former Island Dairies facility.

Manley will need a lot more breadfruit as demand for the vodka continues to grow with export to other islands and the U.S. mainland starting soon. But fresh-from-the-tree breadfruit isn't what Manley and other breadfruit entrepreneurs are most interested in.

"Most of the demand and potential is for breadfruit flour," said Olive, whose farm currently grows and distributes fresh breadfruit along with other fruits and vegetables. The market preference for flour is in part because, once picked, breadfruit doesn't travel well, especially long distances.

That means a processing facility will be needed to get large quantities of local breadfruit into Manley's vodka. And at the rate that trees are being planted, Olive says there is going to be a lot of breadfruit in a few years.

"We will likely flood the local market for fresh breadfruit and there is no large-scale production of breadfruit flour in the V.I. currently, or across the Caribbean," Olive said, adding that plans for a processing facility on St. Croix are being discussed. ■



## CARIBBEAN YOUTH DAY 2019

On the occasion of Caribbean Youth Day 2019 (CYD19), ECLAC Caribbean hosted a Regional Virtual Session in partnership with the Caribbean Regional Youth Council (CRYC), on 'Confronting the social issues impacting education for an economically sustainable region', which brought together regional stakeholders, including regional youth leaders, representatives of National Youth Councils, NGO's, private sector, government agencies and international organizations operating in the subregion. The online dialogue identified several social issues that impact education delivery and accessibility across the Caribbean. Speakers in this virtual

session included representatives of the Caribbean Development Bank, the Commonwealth Youth Council, and ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, which opened the debate with youth representatives around the future of Education and its importance for Caribbean Sustainable Development. The Youth dialogue session debated on the implications for new skill sets and its links to innovation and the creative economies. Participants reflected on the key skills required for building regional links with the global economy and how to harness youth social and intellectual capital in benefit of the region.

The regional meet-up was

the final event in a series of events observing CYD19, on 30 September 2019, this year marking its 34th anniversary. CYD19 addressed how social issues such as mental health, drugs and alcohol, violence, etc., impact education. The online session was an opportunity to share actions and best practices in transforming education, with examples of action on gender responsive and socially inclusive education programming. ECLAC will remain committed to promote the dialogue with regional and international youth networks and other stakeholders on the linkages between education, economic empowerment and sustainable development. ■



# STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Belize

## LOAN AGREEMENT WITH IDB

- Nov 4 -

The Prime Minister of Belize, Dean Barrow, and Country Representative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Dr. Cassandra Rogers, signed a loan agreement in the amount of US\$ 14 million to strengthen tax administration in Belize. The project aims to strengthen tax administration through improved governance and operational processes.

## NATIONAL INVESTMENT POLICY

- Nov 29 -

The Government of Belize, through the Ministry responsible for Investment, Trade and Commerce, BELTRAIDE and the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) plans to launch the Belize National Investment Policy and Strategy (NIPS) on Monday 2 December 2019. The NIPS seeks to establish a national framework that will guide both domestic and foreign investments. The primary objective of the NIPS is to determine the national direction toward economic development with greater certainty and predictability.



The Bahamas

## DORIAN LOSSES COULD SURPASS \$2.5 BILLION

- Nov 29 -

According to a report by the Governor of the Central Bank of The Bahamas (CBOB), John Rolle, the losses of assets destroyed by Hurricane Dorian could surpass \$2.5 billion, or 20 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Hurricane Dorian devastated parts of Abaco and Grand Bahama in early September 2019. Rolle also said that economic activity on both islands came to a halt and neither island has recorded any tourism activity given the complete shutdown of infrastructure on the islands.

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

- Nov 28 -

The Bahamas has officially launched a digital transformation programme that will make it possible for all major Government services to be accessed online. The Government's Digital Transformation to Strengthen Competitiveness programme is being funded by a US\$30 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and will be implemented in phases over a six-year period.



Barbados

## IMF VISIT

- Nov 28 -

On September 3–6, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) team led by Bert van Selm visited Bridgetown to discuss implementation of Barbados' Economic Recovery and Transformation (BERT) plan which has been supported by the IMF under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF). Results of the report showed that Barbados continues to make good progress in implementing its ambitious and comprehensive economic reform program.

## NEW IMMIGRATION BILL

- Nov 24 -

The Barbados Government has approved the framework of a comprehensive review of the existing immigration policy and legislation. According to Home Affairs Minister, Edmund Hinkson, the review efforts are expected to result in a new Immigration Bill which will be presented to the Parliament in January 2020. Hinkson said that one of the proposed amendments to acquiring citizenship will be by way of grandfathering.



## THE CARIBBEAN COMMITS TO A POLLUTION-FREE FUTURE

**T**he Caribbean is committed to achieving a pollution-free future. This was announced during a recent meeting, which was held to launch the 'Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States' (ISLANDS) programme in Trinidad and Tobago.

The ISLANDS initiative will tackle chemical and waste management in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) globally, with a focus on Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Ocean states.

Waste management is an issue of increasing importance for island nations globally, with growing populations, rapid development and increasing amounts of imported goods all putting pressure on the limited capacity of SIDS to safely manage and dispose of toxic and polluting substances. As of 2019, SIDS produced an average of 2.3 kg of waste per person per day – 48% higher than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average – much of it from the

burgeoning tourism sector.

ECLAC Caribbean's Sustainable Development Officer, Artie Dubrie, attended the ISLANDS meeting and described the initiative as an important development for the subregion, given the need for SIDS-appropriate technologies for waste treatment. "Because of low economic growth and environmental vulnerabilities, some Caribbean countries lack the capacity to sustainably manage increasing waste production. This new programme will help in finding solutions on a regional and national scale, to assist in the prevention and management of waste and pollution in the Caribbean."

Amongst the aims for the ISLANDS' initiative is the elimination of over 9,000 metric tons of contaminated material and more than 150,000 metric tons of marine litter from the Caribbean region. A growing number of governments have already undertaken action, particularly on the prevention of plastic pollution in the environment through policies

regulating the production and import of plastic.

The five-year programme will bring together governments and other stakeholders from across the region to develop and implement regional legislation on chemicals and waste management, including the elimination of persistent organic pollutants, highly hazardous pesticides, and the sound management of e-waste and end-of-life vehicles. It will also improve control on the import of products and support the design of sanitary engineered landfills and sustainable food production systems.

As a result, the project will prevent future build-up of chemicals in the Caribbean environment, ensure the safe management and disposal of chemicals and promote sustainable consumption through circular economy approaches. ■



## SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES RECEIVE SDGS SUPPORT

**T**he issues facing Caribbean countries in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, were addressed by a team from ECLAC Caribbean, during a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) sensitization mission to that country.

Led by Coordinator of ECLAC Caribbean's Social Development and Statistics Unit, Dr. Abdullahi Abdulkadri, the team identified several recommendations for the country, including the establishment of an SDG institutional framework, which should emphasize coherence, integration, coordination and multi-sectoral involvement.

"For this to assist with achievement of the SDGs in Saint Vincent and the

Grenadines, there must be high-level political support to mobilize and coordinate public institutions and policies, along with the involvement of key line ministries with sufficient political power and clout as well as some degree of control over financial resources to operationalize the institutional framework," said Abdulkadri.

The SDG mission also uncovered a need for stakeholders to identify the full process of implementation of the SDGs and determine how the different partners can assist in this process. In this regard, Abdulkadri noted that "there is a critical role for Parliament in SDG implementation through their oversight and legislative functions, including adoption of the budget." Abdulkadri said that there was

also a need for more stakeholder consultations, especially engagement and dialogue involving civil society organizations, to get a sense of what is happening on the ground, as well as for those in power to be more cognizant of the existing challenges and find ways to foster fruitful partnerships to advance the wellbeing of the population of the country. ■



## SNEAK PREVIEW ARTICLE

Look out for more  
in upcoming issues!

# STUDY ON CARIBBEAN NATIONAL STATISTICAL LEGISLATION

**T**he scarcity of data and statistics in the Caribbean remains a challenge for reporting on the SDGs, a challenge which makes it necessary for countries to develop new tools and frameworks. According to an upcoming ECLAC Caribbean study, these approaches should include the production of disaggregated data, the exchange and sharing of large amounts of data, the coordination of data producers, and the harnessing of new technological resources.

Data plays a critical role in the achievement of sustainable development – from planning to implementation and monitoring and reporting. However, the statistical frameworks of several Caribbean countries are over 30 years old – including some which pre-date the countries' independence. As a result, these frameworks do not reflect modern statistical practices. In addition, government agencies and private sector organizations alike are hesitant to share data in the absence of a modern framework, which results in large amounts of data going unused, for example in the monitoring of the SDGs.

Stemming from the above, for National Statistical Systems (NSS) to meet the 2030 Agenda's demand for data, it will be necessary for Caribbean countries to adopt legal frameworks that adequately respond

to the challenges of the data revolution for sustainable development.

It is in this context that the upcoming ECLAC Caribbean study entitled 'Review of Caribbean national statistical legislation against the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics' will assess the compliance of national statistical legal frameworks of 24 Caribbean countries with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNFPOS). Moreover, the existence of a legal framework that complies with the UNFPOS is a critical enabling factor for National Statistical Systems (NSS) to produce official statistics that are of high quality and contribute to a country's adherence to international standards.

Such an assessment will provide the basis for making recommendations to the respective countries on policy actions needed to ensure full compliance of their statistics legislation thereby laying a solid foundation for the effective functioning of their NSS. Furthermore, an up-to-date law will enhance the collection and processing of data for the SDG indicators—a task which remains daunting for most Caribbean countries. ■

# ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

## UNITED NATIONS DAY Staff Lunch

**U**nited Nations Day was first observed on October 24, 1948. Since then, on and around October 24, many activities are organized by all parts of the United Nations. These include: concerts; flying the UN flag on important buildings; debates on the relevance of the work of the UN in modern times; and statements by heads of states and other leaders.

At ECLAC Caribbean, we celebrate the day each year with an array of dishes from our colleagues' favourite selection of recipes. ■





# Superb Sauteed Mushrooms



## What you will need:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon red cooking wine
- 1 tablespoon teriyaki sauce, or more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt, or to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

## Method:

1. Heat olive oil and butter in a large saucepan over medium heat.
2. Cook and stir mushrooms, garlic, cooking wine, teriyaki sauce, garlic salt, and black pepper in the hot oil and butter until mushrooms are lightly browned, about 5 minutes.
3. Reduce heat to low and simmer until mushrooms are tender, 5 to 8 more minutes.





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