



WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SYMPOSIUM ON GENDER
MAINSTREAMING IN WATER
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

REDATAM

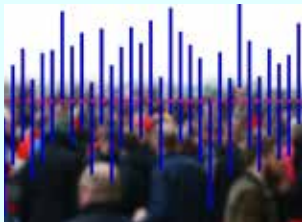
REDATAM WORKSHOP BENEFITS
DOMINICA

UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS

TRAINING SESSION INCREASES
CAPACITY OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES TO APPLY FOR FUNDING



CONTENTS



Cover Image by Blaine Marcano of ECLAC Caribbean

4

Article

Study on debt sustainability and economic growth

8

Feature Article

Symposium on gender mainstreaming in water resources management

12

Article

REDATAM workshop benefits Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis

16

Article

Forum on Just Transition, Green jobs and climate action

20

Article

ECLAC releases new book on climate change and human rights

22

ECLAC Caribbean Family

Seasonal Traditions

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.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor: Alexander Voccia
Copy Editor: Denise Balgobin
Publication Design: Blaine Marcano

Please see our contact details on the back cover of this magazine

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Timeline

About

Events

Photos

More



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January Events

1

New Year's Day
1 January 2020

14

Executive Board of UN-Women, Election of Bureau
New York, 14 January 2020

20

83rd of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
Geneva, 20 January - 7 February 2020

24

International Day of Education
24 January 2020

27

XIV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America
and the Caribbean.
Santiago, 27 - 30 January 2020



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Jan 5

2020 starts the Decade of Action for the #GlobalGoals. Here are 17 New Year's resolutions for you to help make the world a better place for everyone. http://bit.ly/About_SDGs



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Dec 31

Wishing everyone, everywhere peace and happiness in 2020."
- António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations



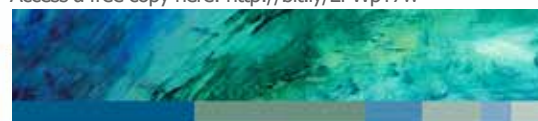
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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Dec 27

"Climate change and human rights: contributions by and for Latin America and the Caribbean"
Access a free copy here: <http://bit.ly/2PWpY7w>



CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

CONTRIBUTIONS BY AND FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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SNEAK PREVIEW ARTICLE

Look out for more
in upcoming issues!

STUDY ON DEBT SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The high, and in many instances unsustainable, public debt of Caribbean countries has increasingly emerged as an issue of concern for regional policy makers. Despite undertaking fiscal reforms and debt reduction initiatives in recent years, many countries are still struggling to manage this onerous burden. In 2018, the total debt of the Caribbean stood at US\$56.2 billion; representing over 70.5 % of subregional GDP. In fact, at the end of 2018, thirteen Caribbean countries had debt-to-GDP ratios that exceeded the accepted sustainability threshold of 60%, and several ranked among the most highly indebted countries in the world.

In light of the challenges presented by this significant debt stock with accompanying high debt servicing costs, which averaged just under 30 percent of government revenue in 2018, the resultant narrowing of Caribbean economies' fiscal space has resulted in sharply contracted resources for investing in SDG implementation.

It is within this context of high public debt, persistent fiscal deficits, which on average were 2% of GDP in 2018, and anaemic growth rates (averaging 0.6% since the global financial crisis), that Caribbean countries are endeavoring to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In order to explore specific policy prescriptions to address these challenges, ECLAC Caribbean has undertaken a study entitled 'Impact of Debt Sustainability on Economic Growth and the Ability of the Caribbean to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'.

The study examines whether the high public debt, which has influenced fiscal spending, has the potential to undermine the ability of Caribbean economies to achieve key policy objectives in areas such as poverty, health and education as articulated in their National Development Plans. Belize, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago are examined in case study.



ECLAC presents policy-related and other recommendations aimed at ensuring that development gains in education, health and poverty reduction, achieved in the countries examined are not reversed because of the spill-over effects of high and/or increasing public debt. The study will be available during this year. ■



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO MOVES TO STEM DECLINE IN MANGROVE FORESTS

The Planning Ministry of Trinidad and Tobago is taking action to reduce the threats to mangrove forests, and to promoting their sustainable use, as revealed in a recent press release. The Ministry reported that mangrove coverage has been declining in Trinidad in recent years. Reduction in mangrove cover recorded in Caroni Swamp was assessed primarily due to erosion.

There have also been large areas of mangrove loss north of the Blue River and Godineau Swamp when mangroves were cleared to facilitate construction of a highway, the Ministry added. This has also been the case at Cuesa River in Chaguaramas, Guaracara River, Marabella and North Claxton Bay due to development activity.

“In Waterloo, mangrove loss has resulted because of severe coastal erosion. In Tobago, notable decline was observed in Buccoo Bay, while minor declines were

recorded in Little Rockly Bay, Louis D’or, Minister’s Bay and Petit Trou Lagoon,” the release reported.

“While these may seem like small declines, the impacts of mangrove loss are significant. With an estimated 80 per cent of all socio-economic activities and 70 per cent of our population located near the coast, mangrove protection is vital for the safety and livelihoods of our communities,” the Ministry added.

The Ministry noted that through the Improving Forestry and Protected Areas Management in Trinidad and Tobago (IFPAMTT) project, management plans have been developed for six pilot protected areas including northeast Tobago marine area, Main Ridge Forest Reserve, Matura Forest and coastal zone, Trinity Hills Wildlife Sanctuary, and two wetlands containing mangrove forests - the Nariva Swamp and coastal zone and Caroni Swamp. ■

November 26



Symposium on gender mainstreaming in

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Evidence demonstrates that differences in access, control and uses of resources determines the extent to which persons are vulnerable to hazards and how well and fast they can recover from a disaster. For example, female headed households are at a higher risk of poverty and more likely to live in inadequate housing in urban and rural areas vulnerable to the impacts of climate-related events. In the Caribbean, specifically, women are usually responsible for household activities related to the storage and retrieval of water, and so are typically engaged in identifying alternative sources in periods of drought or during the interruption of service, especially in rural communities.* Water resources management policies and practices, as well as disaster and risk mitigation approaches, would therefore greatly benefit from the integration of gendered perspectives.

* ECLAC (2019). Draft Background paper Toward Improving Caribbean SIDS policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks, implementation and monitoring and reporting approaches to gender mainstreaming into selected sectors of water resources management and climate-related events and disaster risk reduction.

[READ MORE](#)



Symposium on gender mainstreaming in water resources management

These were some of the issues discussed when the United Nations (UN) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted, for the first time, a general recommendation on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change.** The 2030 Agenda also encourages countries to promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in small island developing States(SIDs), focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

In this spirit, ECLAC Caribbean, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), jointly organized a `Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender in Water Resources Management, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies in the Caribbean', held in Trinidad and Tobago during 26-27 November 2019.

The Symposium drew attention to the fact that although the Caribbean is one of the regions of the world which is significantly impacted by natural disasters,

gender mainstreaming is not yet considered an integral component of the Disaster and Risk Management framework. The Symposium therefore discussed mechanisms and tools for gender mainstreaming into disaster and risk management frameworks, focusing on water resources management as an initial step and bringing examples of successful initiatives of countries in the region.

During the opening session of the Symposium, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, outlined that in many of the Caribbean



Attendants of the Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender in Water Resources Management, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies in the Caribbean

“

We are placing particular emphasis on the exchange of ideas and experiences and contributions to CARICOM's Draft Gender Equality Strategy...

Diane Quarless - Director, ECLAC Caribbean

”

countries the normative and institutional frameworks lack gender perspectives: “We are placing particular emphasis on the exchange of ideas and experiences and contributions to CARICOM's Draft Gender Equality Strategy through ECLAC's document on Mainstreaming Gender in Water Resource Management, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies,” Quarless emphasized. Also speaking during the opening ceremony, Gaietry Pargass, Gender Expert, Office of the Prime Minister- Gender and Child Affairs, Trinidad and Tobago added that “We must place emphasis on

gender analysis as gender disparity is exacerbated during climate change related disasters.”

The Symposium addressed challenges and opportunities in mainstreaming gender in water resources management, gender in climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction, data and indicators and achieving policy coherence. The discussions and experiences shared during the symposium will serve as inputs and guidance for the inclusion of environmental issues in CARICOM's draft gender equality strategy and

will thereby enable improvements in the reduction of disaster risk through protection of all of the populations of CARICOM Member states. ■

** See Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation No.37. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>



TRAINING SESSION INCREASES CAPACITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

A recent training session organized by ECLAC Caribbean provided administrators of Universal Service Funds (USFs) organizations working with persons with disabilities (PWDs) with practical insights and exercises on how to access funds for disability-related projects.

The training guided participants in how to better use USFs to increase access to technology for PWDs. This ultimately supports governments in the subregion in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A USF is a system of telecommunications subsidies and fees used to promote universal access to telecommunications services.

In the Caribbean, there are approximately 1.3 million persons with a disability of

some kind and around 250,000 persons with a significant disability. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) face a range of physical, social, attitudinal and institutional barriers that prevent their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. As a result, they experience poorer outcomes in health, education, employment and housing.

Held on 23 October 2019, the training session brought together representatives of national USFs, PWDs and organizations working with them across the Caribbean.

The training was held against the backdrop of a recent ECLAC study, entitled "Using Universal Service Funds to increase access to technology for Persons with Disabilities in the Caribbean". This study identified several challenges to increasing the effectiveness of USFs in the Caribbean as well as better utilizing them to

increase access to technology for persons with disabilities. Included in these challenges are that USFs struggle to create enough projects targeting PWDs and their special access needs, and to effectively engage with organizations working with PWDs.

Stemming from the findings of the ECLAC study, the training focused on the concepts of disability, inclusive development and ICT accessibility, and demonstrated the latest ICTs available for PWDs, the opportunities they create for people with different types of disabilities, and the main elements of a successful USF project proposal. Furthermore, participants worked together increasing the tools and methods discussed to construct a project proposal to access USF funds.

In addition, the training also provided guidance to USFs on how to establish a disability



Photo credit: <http://english.hanban.org/>

JAMAICA PRIORITIZES WELL-BEING AND SAFETY IN HEALTH SERVICES

focal point system; explained the qualifications, scope of work and targets of a focal point; and detailed the financial resources and other types of support necessary to ensure the success of a focal point system.

Participants in the training session were given an opportunity to share their views on the challenges to creating USF projects for PWDs, discuss solutions to these challenges and network for future joint projects. Further information and presentations from the session may be found in the training website:

<https://www.cepal.org/en/events/training-session-increasing-access-technology-persons-disabilities> ■

The Jamaican government is prioritizing health and welfare services by investing nearly two billion dollars in hospital security protocols. According to official sources, the State allocated US\$1.7 billion to the Ministry of Health and Welfare to promote the safety of workers and patients in hospital facilities.

Among the protocols to be implemented are 24-hour foot patrols throughout hospitals in the country, identification badges to be worn by staff members, and periodic checks of sterile areas. Minister of Health Christopher Tufton affirmed that the government investment is intended to provide peace of mind and support to the persons who make use of the country's health institutions.

To promote this welfare, through the Health Ministry and local security companies, the government signed an agreement for the next three years to provide better services in public hospitals. ■



REDATAM WORKSHOP BENEFITS DOMINICA AND SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

Providing easy access to census data is one of the most effective ways for a statistical office to encourage wider use of data for decision making and development planning. Caribbean statistical offices disseminate census data in various forms, including through census reports, REDATAM (REtrieval of DATA for small Areas by Microcomputer) applications, and through the release of anonymised microdata.

Traditional census reports are thus usually the first ‘port of call’ for users of census data, and REDATAM applications provide controlled access to census microdata, in that the software allows users to generate customized tables, indicators, graphs and maps in accordance with their own needs. The application provides users with much richer and more flexible access to the data, including by disaggregating data by sex, age, ethnicity, employment status, health and disability status or any other variable of interest, while still protecting the confidentiality of individual census records.

A recent workshop organized

by ECLAC on Census Data Dissemination using REDATAM was held in Dominica and in Saint Kitts and Nevis, during 18 to 20 November 2019. The workshop focused on building capacity of participants in census data processing and dissemination, and providing support to the two countries in making their 2011 census data available online.

ECLAC Caribbean’s Population Affairs Officer, Francis Jones, explained that national population and housing censuses are not only a key source of demographic and social statistics in their own right, but also provide input data for the calculation of many other social and economic statistics.

“They are therefore of critical importance to national statistical systems and, by extension, to national development planning, policy making, and monitoring international commitments such as the SDGs,” he said.

Since the 2010 round of Caribbean population and housing censuses, ECLAC has sought to make census data more widely available to policy makers, researchers and the public by promoting

and supporting the use of the REDATAM software for online dissemination of census data.

ECLAC carried out nine REDATAM workshops in the Caribbean between 2008 and 2016. These were combined regional and national workshops and most Caribbean statistical offices, whose representatives had the opportunity to receive at least some training during this period.

To date, eight ECLAC member States have made their data from the 2010 round of censuses available online through REDATAM. This represents an improvement over the 2000 round when four countries implemented REDATAM.

Those countries that have made data from one or more censuses available online through REDATAM are: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Belize, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. ■



EXPERTS SAY RISING OCEAN ACIDITY SPELLS ECONOMIC DANGER FOR THE V.I.

A recent Scientific American article indicates the acidification of the ocean will have a dramatic effect on the economy of the U.S. and British Virgin Islands.

The ocean is becoming more acidic because it absorbs excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The atmosphere retains carbon dioxide when fossil fuels are burned.

The article states, "Ocean acidification threatens to cause billions of dollars in damage to the U.S. economy, harming everything from crabs in Alaska to coral reefs in Florida and the Caribbean, said researchers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said in a new report."

The Scientific American article states, "Two U.S. regions appear particularly endangered: Alaska, with its lucrative seafood industry, and the Florida Keys, Puerto Rico

and the U.S. Virgin Islands, whose coral reefs attract tourists and protect against flood damage and coastal erosion."

Even with the latest NOAA report, this is not news to many in the Virgin Islands who monitor the environment.

"It is a climate crisis and people are not paying attention," said Jason Budsan, president of the V.I. Conservation Society. "It is not what you can see that is important it is what you cannot see because it makes everything you do see, possible. By the time we see a decrease in shellfish and dead corals it is too late because the cascading of the ecosystem occurred in the microbial level," said John Farchette, a ranger at East End Marine Park on St. Croix.

Farchette points to research on diatoms, single-celled algae, which are the basis of most ocean life and appear to be affected

by the rising acidity of the ocean. Observations of minor changes in the life of shellfish can mean dramatic changes in populations. The "beard" some clams use to attach to rocks appears weakened where acidity has risen. In other shellfish, their shells might be thinner and less protective as acidity rises. ■





ANOTHER BIG OIL FIND IN THE CARIBBEAN – THIS TIME IT'S OFFSHORE SURINAME

On the heels of major oil discoveries in Guyana, another big find has been made by French and US companies drilling offshore Suriname.

The US-based Apache Corporation and French multinational Total S.A, which are equal partners in the Block 58 acreage off the coast of the Caribbean, report that they have made a significant oil discovery at the Maka Central-1 well in the Block.

It is reported that the well, drilled by the drillship Noble Sam Croft, encountered more than 123 metres net pay of high-quality light oil and gas rich condensate net pay. Further drilling and testing are to be carried out to appraise the resources and productivity of the reservoir.

“We are very pleased with this first significant oil discovery, made just after our entry into

Block 58. The result is very encouraging and proves the extension of the prolific world-class Guyana Cretaceous oil play into Suriname waters,” said Kevin McLachlan, Senior Vice President Exploration at Total which is also exploring in neighbouring Guyana.

“We are optimistic about the large remaining potential of the area still to be discovered and will test several other prospects on the same Block.”

John J. Christmann, CEO and President of oil and gas exploration and production company Apache, was also pleased with the results from Maka Central-1.

“The well proves a working hydrocarbon system in the first two play types within Block 58 and confirms our geologic model with oil and condensate in shallower zones and oil in deeper zones,” he said.

Christmann added that Block 58, which comprises 1.4 million acres, offers significant potential beyond the discovery at Maka Central.

“We have identified at least seven distinct play types and more than 50 prospects within the thermally mature play fairway. In partnership with Total, we look forward to advancing both exploration and development of discoveries on the block,” he said.

The Noble Sam Croft will drill the next well, Sapakara West-1, approximately 20 kilometres southeast of Maka Central-1. ■



FORMER BARBADOS PM TO BE LIAT'S NEW CHAIRMAN

Another Barbadian is set to lead the Board of the Antigua-based regional airline LIAT. Former Prime Minister Owen Arthur will succeed Jean Holder as Chairman of the financially-troubled carrier, Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne announced over the weekend.

"I have to tell you, I don't think there could be any better candidate," he said in making the announcement.

"Owen Arthur would have spent a large amount of his Prime Ministerial equity ensuring the survival of LIAT, and now that it is at the crossroads again, I think that Owen is the right person to lead LIAT out of these difficulties."

Although not going into details, Browne said some changes are on the cards for LIAT and he believes the airline has "a very bright future" ahead. "We have come to a consensus on the way forward," he said, explaining that "a lot of the differences that existed we've been able to resolve them".

Holder announced his retirement last month, informing LIAT shareholders that after 16 years as a Director and Chairman of LIAT, he would not be available for nomination for the next term. ■



FORUM ON JUST TRANSITION, GREEN JOBS AND CLIMATE ACTION

A tripartite regional dialogue on decent work, green jobs and just transition was recently organized by the Government of Chile (Ministry of Labour and Social Security and Ministry of environment), ECLAC and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Experts from both the public and private sectors of the region spoke about just transition, green job creation and climate action in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile during October 2019, the meeting's main goal was to share knowledge and experiences among the countries of the region, in the areas of "just transition" towards a more sustainable development considering climate change. "Just transition" may be described as a deliberate effort to plan for and invest in a transition to environmentally and socially

sustainable jobs, sectors and economies. ECLAC's meeting was part of the activities prior to the UN Conference on Climate Change, COP 25.

The Forum sought to encourage dialogue among the range of stakeholders in the labour market, such as employers', workers' and government organizations on the various aspects of the relationship between climate change and decent work. In fact, while the impacts of climate change could disrupt the functioning of the economy and the labour market, decarbonization and adaptation and mitigation measures could also be a generator of new jobs, improved employment quality, social justice and poverty eradication.

In his welcome remarks, Raúl García-Buchaca, Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme

Analysis of ECLAC, warned that "environmental deterioration negatively affects the world of work, so a transition towards a more sustainable model is urgently needed."

He underscored that the dialogue was essential in working towards Agenda 2030, since it is more urgent than ever to reaffirm the advancement of equality.

Five Caribbean countries attended the Forum; Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica. ■



WRECKS OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

Beneath the crystal-clear waters of the Cayman Islands lies the wreckage of almost 200 ships. Spanning the centuries from sail-powered British naval frigates to modern submarine rescue vessels, the wrecks of the Cayman Islands are fascinating to historians and divers alike. Here are a few highlights Cayman's most famous wrecks.

The Wreck of the Ten Sail

The most famous of Cayman's many shipwreck stories, the Wreck of the Ten Sail has become part of national folklore. It was in the early hours of 8 February 1794 that British naval ship the HMS *Convert*, along with nine merchant ships that were part of a much-larger convoy, headed from Jamaica to the UK, struck the reefs off East End. Ten ships

were lost but Caymanians were lauded for their efforts to rescue the survivors in the aftermath of the tragedy in what is perhaps the first documented incidence of Caymankind.

The USS *Kittiwake*

Exploring the dark, atmospheric corridors of the USS *Kittiwake* is one of the highlights of any dive trip to the Cayman Islands. The former submarine rescue vessel was deliberately sunk off Seven Mile Beach in 2011 to add a new attraction for the scuba industry. It has become one of the island's best-loved sites and a favourite with photographers. The US Navy ship, in commission from 1946 to 1994, was tasked with recovering the 'black box' from the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, which exploded over the Atlantic, killing seven astronauts, just 73

seconds after lifting off in 1986.

The *Oro Verde*

The name *Oro Verde* literally translates as 'green gold' in Spanish. Originally a US Navy ship, the 250-ton vessel was converted to a cargo boat, shipping bananas from Central America to the US. It was also rumoured to be involved in marijuana smuggling, according to Lawson Wood's book, 'Shipwrecks of the Cayman Islands'. The ship was abandoned in Cayman's waters in 1976 amid reports of unrest among the crew, who had reportedly not been paid. ■



STRONG EARTHQUAKE JOLTS SEVERAL CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.2 rocked several Caribbean islands early in 2020 as countries were being urged to continue monitoring the situation in Puerto Rico where two strong earthquakes have been blamed for the death of one man and damage to several buildings in that country.

The Trinidad-based Seismic Research centre (SRC) at the University of the West Indies, Saint Augustine campus reported that the quake occurred at 10.01 (local time) on 08 January 2020, and was located Latitude: 15.18N; Longitude: 61.22W and at a depth of 123 kilometres (km).

The SRC said that the quake was felt 23 km south east of Roseau in Dominica, as well as 66 km north, north west of Fort-de-France, the capital of the French island of Martinique and 124 km south south

east of Point-à-Pitre, the capital of Guadeloupe.

The SRC said there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage and the Barbados-based Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) joined SRC in urging Caribbean countries to monitor the situation in Puerto Rico.

CDEMA said it was advising member states "to continue to monitor the situation in Puerto Rico and to be guided by the alerts received from their respective NTWCs and by the established protocols outlined in their respective tsunami and coastal hazard plans".

It said that together with the Regional Response Mechanism Partners, they will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates if the situation warrants. The SRC also said that the recent

earthquakes in Puerto Rico should serve as a reminder to the Caribbean "that our region is seismically active and we always need to be prepared".

Indeed, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake also struck in the Caribbean Sea in January 2020, followed by a series of strong aftershocks, shaking a large stretch from Florida to Mexico but apparently caused no major damage or casualties.

The initial tremor was centered 86 miles northwest of Montego Bay, Jamaica, and 87 miles west-southwest of Niquero, Cuba, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Moderate shaking was also felt on Grand Cayman Island, while light shaking was reported on the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. Other affected countries include the Bahamas, Haiti and Honduras. ■

STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Belize

HISTORICAL FISHERIES BILL

- Jan 17 -

The Wildlife Conservation Society issued a statement congratulating the Government and people of Belize on the passing of a historic Fisheries Resources bill at the House of Representatives. The new bill will help make the country's small-scale fisheries more sustainable for both marine life and people. It replaces previous legislation in place for almost seven decades and aims to modernize and transform Belize's small-scale fishing industry.

PLASTIC PHASE-OUT

- Jan 23 -

The Government of Belize continues its phase-out of plastics and Styrofoam utensils with a new set of activities. The effort comes after the passage of the Environmental Protection (Pollution from Plastics) Regulations, 2020, which came into effect as law on 15 January.



The Bahamas

BAHAMAS PETROLEUM OPENS MUTUAL FUND

- Jan 6 -

London-listed Bahamas Petroleum (AIM:BPC) announced that it will open its professional mutual fund to investors from 6 January. The oil and gas exploration firm opened the fund under the 1992 Companies Act of The Bahamas one month before listing the fund. The fund's objective is to create a pathway for Bahamian investors to invest in the group and exploration activities at the planned upcoming exploration well.

LEAST CORRUPT COUNTRY

- Jan 24 -

The Bahamas has been dubbed the least corrupt country in the Caribbean, according to Transparency International's 2019 Corruption Perception Index. The country was ranked 29th for the second year in a row. Nevertheless, government reformers yesterday signaled that the 'day to day' experience in the country suggests that not enough is being done to address the circumstances and cultural influences that may eventually result in increased corruption.



Barbados

PRIME MINISTER COMMENTS ON MULTILATERAL MEETING

- Jan 20 -

The Prime Minister of Barbados and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Chair, Mia Mottley, stated that her Government will not participate in a multilateral round table discussion between US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and selected Caribbean leaders. Mottley explained that, "As chairman of CARICOM, it is impossible for me to agree that my Foreign Minister should attend a meeting with anyone to which members of CARICOM are not invited. If some are invited and not all, then it is an attempt to divide this region." Pompeo's meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Bahamas, Belize, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia took place in Kingston, Jamaica from 21-22 January.

NEW DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

- Jan 24 -

In its continuing effort to broaden its diplomatic footprint, Barbados has, in the last three weeks, established diplomatic relations with Cambodia and Belarus. The signing ceremonies took place in New York at the respective embassies of Cambodia and Belarus. Her Excellency Ambassador H. Elizabeth Thompson signed on behalf of Barbados, with His Excellency Sovann Ke, signing for Cambodia and His Excellency Valentin Rybakov, signing on behalf of Belarus.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

CONTRIBUTIONS BY AND FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ECLAC RELEASES NEW BOOK ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

At the UN Climate Change Conference COP 25, held from 2 to 13 December 2019, two important initiatives were launched. These were the joint ECLAC/OHCHR publication, entitled 'Climate change and human rights: contributions by and for Latin America and the Caribbean', and the online introductory module of the Escazú Agreement.

The ECLAC/OHCHR publication refers to climate change as the greatest threat of our times and describes how climate change is seriously compromising human rights, including the right to health, food, water, housing, education and cultural life.

The joint publication shows that Latin America and the Caribbean countries have not only been actively engaged in furthering

rights-based approaches to climate action at the international level by, for example, championing gender and indigenous peoples' initiatives under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process, but have also increasingly called for incorporating environmental and climate-related issues into the UN human rights system and mechanisms.

The online introductory module of the Escazú Agreement explains the main components of the Agreement, including how it incorporates access to information, public participation, and access to justice; illustrates how the Agreement protects the vulnerable and human rights defenders; promotes capacity building and international cooperation; and presents the future of the Agreement.

The Escazú Agreement, which was first featured in the Hummingbird October 2019 issue, guarantees Regional Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. In particular, the Agreement seeks to ensure that all people have access to timely and reliable information, can participate effectively in the decisions affecting their lives and their surroundings, and are able to access justice with regard to environmental matters, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Agreement continues to generate discussion and activity on access rights in Latin America and the Caribbean, for instance through national actions taken in the ratification processes – including consultations, meetings, workshops, and awareness-raising

ND



SAINT LUCIA WANTS MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

– or through regional initiatives like the UNECLAC’s Observatory on Principle 10, a database of legislation and caselaw based on research undertaken in support of the Agreement’s negotiation. ■

The Saint Lucia government has stated that it was holding negotiations “with several institutions” to begin the establishment of a medical university there.

Prime Minister Allen Chastanet recently noted on Facebook that the proposed university “will serve as a strategic move as it will allow both the hospital and the university to benefit from the services and opportunities of each other”.

While Chastanet gave no details regarding the proposed medical university for which negotiations are ongoing, it is likely that the facility would be situated in the south of the island.

It was noted that the progress is ongoing with the reconstruction of the St Jude’s Hospital in the south. This 90-bed facility, when completed, will include a new wing to incorporate all the functions and services of the existing East and Surgical Wings. The retrofitting of some of the existing buildings will be necessary to achieve a fully functioning hospital to match the services of a more state-of-the-art modern facility. ■

ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

SEASONAL TRADITIONS

In the Caribbean and other parts of the world, Christmas time is usually a season of generosity and sharing. In December 2019, ECLAC Caribbean partnered with its UN counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago to bring some Yuletide cheer to the local community.

Spearheaded by the Social events committee at ECLAC, staff collected items and prepared a few hampers with goodies, which we delivered personally to people in our extended neighbourhood.

ECLAC Caribbean staff also shared in a delicious annual Christmas lunch together, which is one of our most special times together as a workplace family.

Here are some memories of staff and friends from these two important days. ■





Roast Fish with Lemon and Herbs

What you will need:

For the fish:

- One 2 1/2 pound whole fish, such as red snapper, cleaned and scaled
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped mixed herbs, such as thyme, oregano, parsley and rosemary
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 1/4 fennel bulb, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed

Salsa Verde:

- 1/2 cup minced parsley
- 1/4 cup minced basil
- 1/4 cup minced mint
- 1 tablespoon minced capers
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 jalapeño (optional)
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt
- Pepper

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 450°.
2. Put the fish on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.
3. Make 3 crosswise slashes down to the bone on each side of the fish.
4. Rub with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
5. Stuff each slash with 1 lemon slice and some herbs.
6. Stuff the cavity with the shallot, fennel, garlic and remaining lemon slices and herbs.
7. Roast for about 20 minutes, until the flesh is opaque.

How to prepare the Salsa Verde

8. In a medium bowl, mix all of the ingredients.

Serve the fish with the salsa verde.



CONTACT US

ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean,
1 Chancery Lane, P.O. Box 1113,
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago,
West Indies.

Telephone: 1 868 224 8000
E-mail: registry@eclacpos.org

MEDIA CONTACT
Tel.: 1 868 224 8075
E-mail: media-pos@eclac.org

SOCIAL MEDIA



<https://www.cepal.org/en/headquarters-and-offices/eclac-caribbean>

