



MONITORING COMMITTEE

18TH MEETING OF THE
MONITORING COMMITTEE
OF THE CDCC

SDG IMPLEMENTATION

ECLAC WORKSHOP
EXAMINES INSTITUTIONAL
FRAMEWORK

ECONOMIC GROWTH

HOW GOODS AND SERVICES
AFFECT ECONOMIC GROWTH



UNITED NATIONS

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CONTENTS



4

Article

How goods and services affect economic growth in the Caribbean

8

Feature Article

Development strategies for subregion outlined at the 18th CDCC Monitoring Committee meeting

14

Article

ECLAC workshop examines institutional framework for SDG implementation in the Caribbean

16

Article

Caribbean debt history

24

State of Affairs

Recent activity by Caribbean governments

26

Around the Caribbean

- The Caribbean's Biggest Solar Energy Plant
- Barbuda is looking to go 100 percent green

28

ECLAC Caribbean Family

Behind the scenes

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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ECLAC CARIBBEAN



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Timeline

About

Events

Photos

More



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June Events

5

World Environment Day
5 June 2017

5-16

International Labour Organisation, General
Conference, 106th session
Geneva
5 - 16 June 2017

8

World Oceans Day
8 June 2017

13-15

Conference of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Tenth
session
New York
15 - 25 June 2017

15

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
15 June 2017



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted May 30

The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Keith Rowley, visited today ECLAC's central headquarters in Santiago, Chile. Find out more here: <http://vrb.al/trinidad-prime-minister>



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted May 19

The 18th meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) in Port of Spain, Trinidad: <http://vrb.al/eclac-moncom17>



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted May 18

#ECLACCaribbean held a workshop in Port of Spain for policy makers to gain practical options for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: <http://vrb.al/eclac-sdg-vnr>



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HOW GOODS AND SERVICES AFFECT **ECONOMIC GROWTH** IN THE CARIBBEAN



The recently published Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 2016 focuses on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the challenges of financing for development.

To discuss this important report, The Hummingbird sat down with the Coordinator of ECLAC Caribbean's Economic Development Unit, Mr. Sheldon McLean, for a quick one-on-one.

Q: What will readers find in the 2016 Economic Survey?

A: The publication consists of three sections. Part I outlines the region's economic performance in 2015 and analyses trends in the first half of 2016, as well as the outlook for the rest of the year. It examines the external and internal factors influencing the region's economic performance and highlights some of the macroeconomic policy challenges that have arisen in an external context of weak

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Within the Caribbean, fiscal priorities remain centred on adjustment and consolidation to reduce public debt and debt servicing costs.

Sheldon McLean -
Coordinator, Economic
Development Unit, ECLAC
Caribbean

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growth and high levels of uncertainty. Part II analyses the challenges that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean face at the domestic and international levels in mobilizing financing for development. Part III contains the notes relating to the economic performance of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2015 and the first half of 2016, together with their respective statistical annexes.

Q: How has the subregion's economy behaved in 2016?

A: The report states that with regard to the Caribbean region, low commodity prices have negatively impacted the economic growth of commodity exporting economies. This low growth is the result

of a number of factors negatively impacting several economies. It was expected that commodity prices would begin to increase in 2016, however, they may not attain the high levels of the last decade.

Growth among the service producers averaged 1.6% in 2015 but was projected at 2.5% by year end 2016. The region also struggled with high unemployment of 15.2% in 2015.

Q: To what extent was it possible to mobilize financial resources?

A: On the domestic front, slower growth and tighter fiscal restrictions pose significant challenges for the mobilization of resources. Externally, the classification of many of the region's countries in the middle-income category limits their access to concessional external financing or international support.

Q: What were the fiscal priorities?

A: Within the Caribbean, fiscal priorities remain centred on adjustment and consolidation to reduce public debt and debt servicing costs. The economies, with the largest deficits, notably Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, made the greatest effort at fiscal consolidation. Jamaica also implemented an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program

which sought to reduce its debt by 3.6 percentage points in 2015.

Q: Has inflation been a cause for concern?

A: With regards to inflation, the average rate for the Caribbean in 2015 was 1.5%, a marginal decline from 1.8% in 2014. Inflation declined in service producers but rose sharply for good producers. Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia reported the largest decline in inflation from 2014 to 2015. Suriname experienced an inflationary shock from 2.3% in January 2015, to 4.2% in October 2015, largely due to the removal of energy subsidies and the floating of its currency.

Q: Was the subregion successful in addressing its fiscal and public debt?

A: Overall, according to the report, the subregion managed to reduce its fiscal deficit to 3.8% of GDP in 2015, from 4.1% of GDP in 2014. Fiscal flexibility in the subregion remains low, indicating that fiscal consolidation among the Member States had little effect on the composition of public expenditure. Public debt remains a very large threat to growth and stability in the region, although consolidation efforts are slowly reducing such debt. ■

More than half of electricity demand in Jamaica to be supplied by renewables

The government of Jamaica is projecting that, within two years, more than half of the country's electricity demand, totalling nearly 700 megawatts, will be generated from renewable sources.

According to Finance and Public Service Minister, Audley Shaw, this is based on the government's "aggressive" approach to fuel diversification resulting in over 200 megawatts of renewable energy already

being supplied to the national power grid.

He was speaking at a recent signing ceremony at the Ministry, for the Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) implementation of a three-year US \$2.7 million grant-funded technical cooperation energy efficiency project that will benefit Jamaica and three other Caribbean countries.

Shaw said approximately 120 megawatts of the

200 megawatts are being generated by the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS) power plant in Montego Bay utilizing liquefied natural gas (LNG), following its recent upgrade at a cost of over \$2 billion.

He said the remaining 100 megawatts are being supplied by Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ) subsidiary, Wigton Wind Farm in Manchester, which was built at a cost of over \$50 billion; the

BMR Jamaica Wind plant in Malvern, St Elizabeth, constructed at a cost of over \$15 billion; and a solar plant developed at Content, in Clarendon by WRB Enterprises, at a cost of over \$10 billion.

Shaw noted that on completion of the US\$330 million Renaissance Project, which entails the construction of an LNG 190-megawatt power plant at Old Harbour Bay in St Catherine, "that will put us at over 400 megawatts of

energy that is diversified away from heavy fuel oil and coal."

The minister said the administration welcomed the assistance being provided by the government of Japan under the technical cooperation project. The initiative will bolster the government's efforts to boost Jamaica's renewable energy generation capacity while enhancing energy efficiency.

The project is being implemented in Jamaica in two phases and will be spearheaded by the PCJ. Meanwhile, PCJ Group managing director, Winston Watson, said the entity is undertaking projects to further consolidate the government's energy programme. These, he indicated, include: development of a bio-fuel diesel programme; oil and gas explorations off Jamaica's south coast; and upgrading the PETROJAM refinery. ■



FEATURE ARTICLE

Development strategies for subregion outlined at the 18th CDCC Monitoring Committee meeting



Public officials from across the Caribbean recently gathered in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago for the 18th Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), convened by ECLAC on 19 May. The meeting featured vibrant discussion on the Caribbean's plans to aggressively pursue implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

[READ ARTICLE](#)



18th

MEETING OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE OF THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

Spearheading the discussions, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Aviation of Saint Kitts and Nevis and Chair of the CDCC, Mark Brantley, advocated the need for the subregion to craft a more integrated development strategy, stressing that in implementing Agenda 2030, the Caribbean needed to create synergies with other international platforms, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Samoa Pathway and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing sustainable development.

The high-level meeting also featured panel discussions, which focussed attention on the continuing relevance of development thinking in addressing Caribbean realities. In this regard, Minister Brantley noted that the challenges of high debt, low growth, high unemployment among high school and university graduates - which is in excess of 25%, - non-communicable diseases, climate change and the impact of extreme events needed to be tackled with innovative policies.

With regard to climate change, meeting participants underscored the importance of ensuring that all countries globally endeavour to uphold their climate change commitments.

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ECLAC is also active in supporting the Caribbean's development needs in areas such as renewable energy and energy efficiency...

Diane Quarless -
Director, ECLAC Caribbean

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Discussions on these pivotal challenges faced by the Caribbean were also enriched by the contributions of the Director of ECLAC Caribbean, Diane Quarless, who presented a report on the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, which was held in Mexico City in April 2017.

She noted that the Forum was organized as part of the support of ECLAC to the integration of the SDGs in national development planning and budgeting process, with the specific aim of strengthening institutional architectures, building national capacity and promoting regional and national strategies for statistical development.

The ECLAC Caribbean Director further elaborated on the institutional context and purpose of the Forum, explaining that it served as a mechanism to streamline efforts to implement the SDGs. She specifically cited the need to strengthen data and statistical systems in the subregion as an objective of the Forum, in order to enhance the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) indicator framework.

She also presented a summary of progress in implementation of the 2016-2017 programme of work of ECLAC Caribbean.

The efforts of ECLAC in financing for development were also highlighted, with specific focus on the promotion of the debt reduction strategy for the Caribbean. It was noted that this proposal had and continued to receive widespread recognition and acceptance within the global donor community. The Director noted that ECLAC is also active in supporting the Caribbean's development needs in areas such as renewable energy and energy efficiency (through the completion of six studies, as well as support to two countries in the preparation of National Energy Policies), disaster assessments (this portfolio now resides in the ECLAC Port of Spain office), gender research and advocacy.

Looking to the future, she outlined specific issues that ECLAC Caribbean will address in the upcoming 2018-2019 biennium, including population ageing in the Caribbean, de-risking of the financial sector in the Caribbean, diversification of the tourism sector through research on the creative economy, ICT for development, the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies, and the 2020 round of censuses. ■

CARIBBEAN BENEFITS FROM ECLAC'S SUPPORT OVER THE LAST 70 YEARS

Participants of the 18th CDCC Monitoring Committee meeting took the opportunity of the upcoming 70th anniversary of ECLAC to reflect on the organization's contribution to the development of the region over the last 70 years.

ECLAC Deputy Executive Secretary, Antonio Prado underscored that "ECLAC has never abandoned its structural roots and issues of structural heterogeneity, the problems of poverty and inequality and the need for progressive structural change have been retained as part of its toolkit of analysis under a number of Executive Secretaries. Equality is at the core of ECLAC's thinking on how to promote sustainable development in the region."

He outlined the sterling contribution made by ECLAC's second Executive Secretary (1950 – 1963) and eminent Argentine economist, the late Raúl Prebisch, who advocated the economic integration of Latin America and addressed inequities in the trade relationships between wealthy and poor nations.

Prado related the contributions of Prebisch to those of Saint Lucian economist, the late Sir Arthur Lewis, both of whom he described as men of "extraordinary inventiveness

and talent, who were at the forefront of development thinking and planning for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) respectively, and had similar views on the importance of industrialization as a complement to other viable economic sectors including agriculture."

Both Prebisch and Lewis, Prado continued, "emphasised balanced growth to address the overarching poverty which was a strong feature of the Latin American and Caribbean economic landscape."

He stated that Prebisch and Lewis were also concerned about the lack of financing development, which along with inequality in trade relations and the need for building domestic technical capacity remain challenges to be addressed to this day. Following his leadership of ECLAC, Prebisch subsequently became the first Secretary General of UNCTAD, from 1964 to 1969, and through his influence, helped to internationalise ECLAC thinking on development. He later returned to the ECLAC fold as the head of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), where there was a strong emphasis on industrial planning, policy advice and capacity building.

"This link between ideas on development,

planning, statistics and practice is no less important today as we approach SDG implementation and its monitoring” noted Prado.

Putting the spotlight on the forthcoming celebrations for ECLAC’s 70th anniversary, which will take place in February 2018, the Director of ECLAC Caribbean, Diane Quarless, provided a historical review of ECLAC from its inception and expansion into the Caribbean in a special video presentation.

The video highlighted the role of the Commission in monitoring emerging issues, analyzing their impact on regional and national policy agendas, generating new ideas, proposals and policy recommendations, and providing technical cooperation services and activities that directly benefit the countries of the region. Quarless signalled that since its founding, “ECLAC has always been on the vanguard of radical economic thinking and development practice in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its focus has been on building resilience to promote sustainable development in the region.”

She noted that ECLAC stimulated debate through the regular publishing of its flagship publications and the organization of seminars, technical workshops, training courses and expert meetings, as well as the delivery of technical cooperation services to member States.

In the video, Quarless highlighted that the CDCC, which meets every two years, also provides for sectoral dialogue and policy support through its subsidiary bodies and, with the recently established Forum of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable

Development, is now actively supporting country implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

She further underscored that “...today, ECLAC continues to help the countries of the subregion in critically assessing and responding to the development challenges that confront them. Here in Port of Spain, we have anchored Caribbean pursuit of a sustainable development agenda for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), underscoring their structural disadvantages and inherent vulnerabilities. And we have championed the cause of the Caribbean’s middle income developing countries which face challenges of high indebtedness, poverty and inequality, and are forced to survive in an international climate that uses GDP per capita as the principal measure of their capacity to prevail.” ■



ECLAC

ECLAC workshop examines institutional framework for SDG implementation in the Caribbean



On the eve of the 18th CDCC Monitoring Committee meeting, ECLAC Caribbean convened a workshop to support the acceleration of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Caribbean. The workshop provided policy makers with practical options for establishing and enhancing national institutional frameworks to support SDG implementation. The lack of such frameworks in most Caribbean countries constitutes a major obstacle to the effective implementation of the SDGs. Moreover, institutional arrangements are crucial for promoting national ownership of this global agenda.

While there have been several activities directed at overcoming this obstacle, the pace of SDG implementation in the subregion has remained slow. Many Caribbean countries have started the

process of identifying an institution or establishing an institutional arrangement for the implementation of the SDGs. This process varies, however, from country to country, including in terms of the participatory and consultative mechanisms to include civil society organisations, the private sector, local communities, women and youth organizations, and the Media. The workshop facilitated discussion on a model institutional arrangement for the SDGs which Caribbean governments could consider as a template in setting up their national SDG institutional framework.

The importance of resource mobilization for the implementation of the SDGs was also highlighted during the workshop. Data availability remains a continuous challenge in the Caribbean, partly as a result of the limited financial

resources of Caribbean countries to invest in data collection infrastructure. As a result, the subregion is data deficient in producing data for the SDG indicators. There is thus a need to strengthen the technical, human and financial capacity of statistical institutions to collect and disseminate accurate and timely statistics to support the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Meeting participants recognized the need for a collective discourse and agreement on the SDG priorities at a regional level, and noted that this discourse has not really happened in the Caribbean thus far. Therefore, multi-stakeholder engagements in forums such as this workshop are crucial to determining SDG priorities that are congruent with national development objectives. It was agreed that even if priorities are not the



same across the subregion, there will be sufficient commonalities to allow countries to work together.

The workshop also provided a space for peer-learning on the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). VNRs are important reporting mechanisms to inform the global community about the good practices and challenges faced by countries in the implementation of the SDGs.

In this regard, countries were urged to view VNRs not as an additional reporting burden, but instead as an opportunity to identify common challenges and explore forms of collaboration to overcome them. Thus far, The Bahamas, Belize, Curacao and Jamaica have initiated a VNR process, while Dominican Republic has expressed plans to prepare a VNR in the near future. ■



Turtle Watching Season in Trinidad and Tobago

Each year, from March to August, hundreds of endangered leatherback turtles leave the embrace of their watery habitat to give birth, dragging heavy bodies filled with new life, onto the powdery soft sand beaches of Trinidad and Tobago's coastline. Often surrounded by curious humans during their most private moments, these gentle reptilian mommies dig deep nests into which they lay hundreds of glistening white eggs as moisture that resembles tears, fall from their eyes.

Leatherbacks are just one of five species of marine turtle that nest on Trinidad and Tobago's beaches, but the gentleness of these gigantic pre-historic creatures, who ensure the continuance of the species with a new generation, continue to tug at the heart strings of animal lovers and conservationists.

In Trinidad, the protected beaches of Matura and Grande Riviere are considered two of the most important leatherback nesting sites in the world, positioning the island as one of a few places on earth where these living dinosaurs lay.

For most people meeting a living dinosaur is the stuff of movies and science fiction, but in Trinidad and Tobago from March to August you can do just that.

More than just a once-in-a-lifetime experience, a turtle watching getaway to these islands offers both a history lesson into one of the world's oldest living creatures and a front row seat to their reproductive rituals.

During the turtle nesting season the laying sites are protected and require a permit, issued by the Forestry Division, to be accessed.

Potential turtle watchers should also be prepared to be as quiet and still as possible, to avoid startling the turtles. And for the lucky visitors who may happen to witness hatchlings coming out of their birth pit, it is advised that you don't try to help them. No matter how darling and vulnerable they seem, these tiny babies are well-equipped with their own internal GPS and for thousands of years have been making their way home, on their own. ■

THE CARIBBEAN'S DEBT HISTORY

High levels of public debt represent a critical structural challenge facing Caribbean economies and this is a major concern for the subregion. An upcoming issue of ECLAC's Caribbean Development Report (CDR) takes a look at the debt history in the subregion, examining its genesis and evolution. While the report will be available later this year, The Hummingbird is pleased to offer its readers a sneak preview of the CDR, which will forward solutions to the subregion's debt dilemma.

ECLAC Caribbean notes that while Caribbean countries have largely instituted fiscal consolidation programmes aimed at reducing public debt to manageable levels, there has been some slippage - particularly amongst goods producers - as the pervasive economic effects of soft commodity prices have begun to affect the fiscal performance of these economies. To put the Caribbean's debt challenge in perspective, it should be noted that public debt in the Caribbean continues to exceed that of Latin America and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at similar levels of development.

Apart from the debt stock, debt service payments represent a significant share

of government revenue in the subregion, which crowds out resources that would otherwise be available for investment in upgrading and modernizing key economic infrastructure and administrative systems.

According to ECLAC's forthcoming report, what is worrisome from a growth and development perspective has been the propensity of Caribbean countries to employ cuts in capital investment as a major step in fiscal adjustment. Unsustainable debt therefore remains a serious impediment to the subregion's economic recovery after the global economic crisis, and by extension, its ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is therefore imperative that a subregional strategy, combined with country-specific policy measures, be formulated to address this ongoing challenge.

To this end, the Report will provide an assessment of subregional debt structure and the effectiveness of strategies utilised by selected countries to reduce their debt stock. In addition, debt sustainability analyses will be conducted for countries where data are available. ■

Georgetown Modern Medical Complex To Be Completed Soon

S Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, has announced that the Modern Medical Complex in Georgetown is expected to be completed soon.

Dr. Gonsalves made this announcement while addressing the handing over ceremony of medical equipment to the Georgetown Hospital. "The facilities in all of these areas, despite limitations, have improved markedly. Here at Georgetown, you have a wider range of services being offered," Dr. Gonsalves said.

The Prime Minister noted that the Georgetown Hospital is a Smart Hospital, the first Smart Hospital in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), with a Modern Medical Complex. He noted that the Government recently released a million dollars for continued financing of the Modern Medical Complex.

Despite some delay, the Prime Minister assured that things should be in place shortly so that staff might be recruited and operations launched.

The Georgetown Modern Medical Complex is being constructed at a cost of over EC \$20 million by the Governments of Cuba and SVG. The Complex will be made up of Surgical, Dialysis and Outpatient Units. Services that will be provided upon completion include: Renal Dialysis for adults and children, Intensive Care, Endoscopy, Ophthalmology, Radiology, Ultrasound, Laboratory and General Medical and Surgical Consultations. ■



Development needed for Caribbean's digital financial services sector

Digital financial services have significant potential to provide a range of affordable, convenient and secure banking services to poor people, as well as to small and micro enterprises in the Caribbean.

This was one of the conclusions of a Digital Financial Services (DFS) Workshop, held in Port of Spain in April 2017. The workshop was organised by ECLAC, along with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), in collaboration with the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus (UWI).

In light of the success of the previous Financial Technology workshop that was held in Port of Spain from 1 - 3 June 2016, this year's DFS workshop was well-attended by policy makers seeking greater participation in the digital economy. Financial technology, or FinTech, encompasses a range of approaches to the modernization of the financial services industry. These include new forms of payment systems to support e-commerce, crowd funding technologies to enable business development, and regulatory tools that can detect and prevent financial crimes.

FinTech is an emerging sector poised for high growth in coming years. It appears to be a field in which Caribbean companies may be able to specialize and prosper, and to build services that can be exported to global markets. ECLAC has been in the forefront of identifying appropriate policy responses that address this wave of new financial technologies that have emerged in recent years, and supports the idea that there is great value in bringing together stakeholders from both regulatory institutions and the Caribbean's financial technology industry.

This year's workshop provided Caribbean stakeholders from various sectors with insight on technological innovations for improving financial transactions and financing arrangements. Specifically, it explored online decentralised systems that allow people to exchange goods and services without using traditional monetary instruments, and to assess whether the adoption of digital currencies as an alternative currency in the Caribbean, can serve the needs of this region. ■



The Caribbean's art and craft sector: Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago

ECLAC Caribbean is currently conducting a study on the non-traditional art and craft sector in two Caribbean countries, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. The Hummingbird is pleased to offer its readers a sneak preview of this study, which will be available later this year.

The aim of the study is to undertake an analysis of the visual arts produced by local artisans that are offered for sale. It is recognized that art and craft are often offered for sale to tourists as local artisans seek to expand their markets. This study therefore seeks to contribute to the understanding of the art and craft sector by undertaking a survey of the sector in both countries, and to use the findings to elaborate a value chain for the sector in both countries.

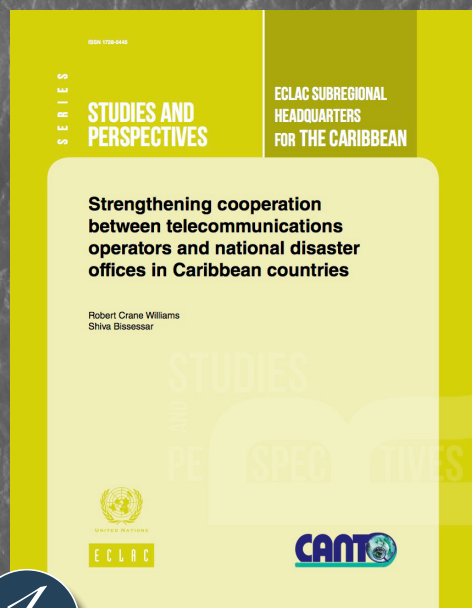
The assessment will also add to the overall understanding of the production, distribution and constraints which affect the development of the sector, and will focus on functional arts and crafts, which include paintings, sculptures, woodwork, weavings, basketry, leather products, traditional jewellery and clothing.

It is anticipated that this study will add to previous research on the sector conducted by USAID (1984), the Association of Caribbean States (2008) and Nurse (2009), which explored issues such as the challenges in increasing the quality of artisanal products in Saint Lucia, as well as the identification of opportunities for women's participation in the production of art and craft to supply the tourism sector in the Caribbean.

What is unique about ECLAC's research is that while previous studies (UNCTAD, 2008; IDB, 2009) point to the potential of art and crafts to contribute to the economy globally, no specific study has assessed the potential of art and crafts to contribute to national economies in the Caribbean.

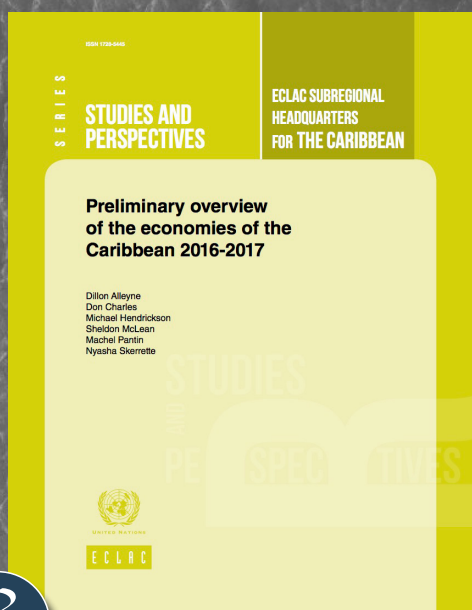
It is expected that these findings can provide insights to the potential for future investment and policy planning for the future development of the sector. ■





1.

Strengthening cooperation between telecommunications operators and national disaster offices in Caribbean countries



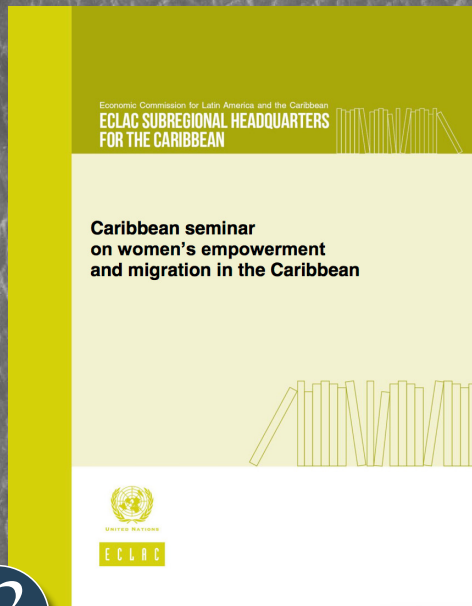
3.

Preliminary overview of the economies of the Caribbean 2016-2017

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DIANE'S CORNER

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



DIANE QUARLESS
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

19/5



18th Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

"For nearly 70 years, ECLAC has served as a key forum for dialogue on issues including financing for development; regional integration; challenges in population and development; productivity and innovation; the knowledge economy; governance of natural resources; physical infrastructure; and social protection issues including gender and youth, this multidisciplinary focus reflecting an integral approach to the achievement of sustainable development."

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RECLAIMING THE MAGIC:

MACROECONOMIC POLICIES TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

"Policy makers in the Caribbean may have lost the art of macroeconomic policy [...] Considerably more effort will have to be placed on addressing old and new challenges (structural gaps) which threaten to undermine and even reverse the development gains of the region." These poignant considerations were at the heart of a presentation delivered by ECLAC Caribbean's Deputy Director, Dr. Dillon Alleyne, at the recent 18th annual conference of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social & Economic Studies (SALISES) UWI St. Augustine Campus, held in Port of Spain, under the theme, 'Small Nations, Dislocations, Transformations:

Sustainable Development in SIDS'.

In his presentation, Dr. Alleyne, who recently spent four months on sabbatical at the SALISES in Jamaica, examined the macroeconomic challenges facing the Caribbean, and suggested ways to respond in light of emerging global changes. The presentation focused upon a broad range of interconnected, topical issues, which ranged from the performance of Caribbean economies relative to the rest of small economies, to the major structural factors constraining the subregion's development, existing policy responses, global UN



Photo of ECLAC Caribbean's Deputy Director, Dr. Dillon Alleyne

mandates that support sustainable development, and emerging global shifts from which the subregion can benefit.

To address the challenges presented and seize the underlying opportunities, Dr. Alleyne also discussed the elements that may constitute the pillars of an appropriate macroeconomic framework for sustainable development. In this regard, special emphasis was placed on the need to encourage sustainable consumption and production choices through the use of economic instruments and reassessment of existing fiscal

structures, including undertaking environmental tax reform. He also highlighted the importance of developing strategic public procurement policies in order to create a critical demand for green products and services.

In addition, other quintessential elements that were underscored within the context of the framework include targeted public support for research and development; strategic investment through public-private sector development outlays to solve the problem of deficits in the public sector; the provision of education subsidies and upgrading of the education system with a view to addressing technology gaps; and ever greater engagement with the diaspora, in order to address the skill deficit arising from the flow of the highly skilled to the OECD countries.

The above elements notwithstanding, sustainable development will be achieved in the Caribbean only to the extent that the subregion is able to successfully address what Dr. Alleyne defined as “the policy trilemma” – that is, how to integrate social, political and economic priorities in a coherent framework. The solution to this dilemma is to encourage public participation in decision making by building inclusive institutions.

As summarized by Dr. Alleyne, “the Caribbean economies are at a cross roads and choices must be made. Standing still means drifting backwards as the world powers on. We are at another turning point but strategic macro policy can lead to progressive transformation if the region confronts its challenges with purpose and commitment.” ■

STATE *of* AFFAIRS



The Bahamas

GENERAL ELECTION – May 11 –

General elections were held in the Bahamas on 10 May 2017. The election resulted in a 35-4 constituency victory for the opposition Free National Movement (FNM) led by Dr. Hubert Minnis, which defeated the ruling Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) led by former Prime Minister Perry Christie. The election was closely monitored by international observers the Caribbean Community, the Commonwealth of Nations, the Organization of American States and the United States.

NEW CABINET – May 17 –

The new Cabinet of the government of the Bahamas will comprise of fourteen men and one woman. Cabinet members took their oath of office during a ceremony held at Government House. Along with the new Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis, other notable appointments were: Mr. Carl Bethel as Attorney General; Mr. Darren Henfield as Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Deputy Prime Minister Peter Turnquest, who was sworn in as Minister of Finance.



Barbados

BARBADOS SIGNS NEW AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT WITH CANADA

– May 11 –

The governments of Barbados and Canada signed a new air transport agreement with the intention of increasing airlift and long stay visitors in both countries. The agreement was signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator Maxine McClean, and High Commissioner of Canada, Marie Legault. McClean explained that, while an air services agreement was signed between Barbados and Canada in 1985, several developments occurred that required a review of the previous agreement.

OECS FOREIGN MINISTERS CONCLUDE 3RD COUNCIL MEETING

– Mar 23 –

OECS ministers of foreign affairs concluded a meeting of the Council of Ministers - Foreign Affairs (COMFA) on May 17, 2017. The meeting was held in Barbados, under the chairmanship of Charles Fernandez, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Immigration of Antigua and Barbuda. All members of the Council save one were represented at ministerial level. The meeting addressed a wide range of matters of critical import to member states.



Jamaica

PM VISITS DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

– May 23 –

The Prime Minister of Jamaica, Andrew Holness, paid an official visit to the Dominican Republic from 15 – 16 May. The encounter marked the first official visit of a head of Jamaican government to the Dominican Republic in more than 34 years. During the visit, Prime Minister Holness signed a visa waiver agreement with the Dominican Republic, one of several other bilateral agreements. The visa waiver will facilitate easier travelling for holders of diplomatic and official passports between Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

SYMPOSIUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE

– May 29 –

Jamaica hosted the Caribbean's first symposium on Climate Change and World Heritage in Kingston from May 29 – 31.

The symposium, which was held under the theme: 'Rallying for the protection of Culture and Heritage in SIDS under a sustainable 21st Century climate change agenda', was hosted by the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation.



Saint Lucia's Summer of Festivals

This year, Saint Lucia has launched an ambitious initiative – a Summer of Festivals – aimed at bringing tangible and lasting economic, social and cultural benefits to the country and its people.

Building on Saint Lucia's outstanding artistic talent and rich cultural heritage, and on its experience in designing and hosting unique events and celebrations such as the Saint Lucia Jazz Festival, Carnival or Jounen Kwéyòl, this new initiative will increase the benefits that Festivals and similar events bring to Saint Lucian communities and to society as a whole, while optimising the impact of public expenditure. The Summer Festival, or Soleil as it has been named, is a series of six festivals taking place from May through October, and according to Prime Minister Allen Chastanet, it is a unique entertainment opportunity which marks the beginning of the exciting plans in store for the industry.

"This is part of our drive to continuously diversify and enhance our tourism product. The idea is when you come to Saint Lucia you can stay all summer long with the extensive events calendar and no shortness of amazing places and sites to visit. We will appeal to all types of music enthusiasts from the region and internationally whether it be Jazz, Reggae, R&B - or you can now choose which event appeals to you most," he said at the launch earlier this year.

The series started in early May 2017, with the Saint Lucia Jazz Festival.

This year, Soleil will include the following events:

- **Roots & Soul (June 16-18):** Dedicated to new trends in reggae, conscious hip-hop, Afropunk and R&B, this festival will also mark the launch of Saint Lucia Carnival.
- **Saint Lucia Carnival (mid-June through mid-July):** A variety of musical competitions lead up to the Parade of the Bands on July 17 and 18. Throughout, Lucian Carnival gives revellers the opportunity to fête throughout the island in true Caribbean fashion.
- **Saint Lucia Food & Rum Festival (August 24-27):** This gastronomic festival invites chefs, wine connoisseurs, rum fanatics and foodies from the Caribbean and around the globe. Inspired by Chefs Nina Compton and Doran Payne, the event will feature culinary demonstrations, rum and wine tastings, dining events and experiences, and musical performances.
- **Country & Blues Festival (September 15 – 17):** The festival will reflect the diversity and modernity of the genres of music that act as powerful storytellers of the past and draw strong parallels to Saint Lucian folk traditions.
- **Arts & Heritage Festival (October):** Building on Jounen Kwéyòl, this month-long festival will celebrate Saint Lucia's cultural, ethnic and artistic heritage with a variety of performances, seminars, lectures, culinary experiences, street parties and art exhibitions. ■



The Caribbean's Biggest Solar Energy Plant

The Caribbean's biggest operational solar plant has opened in Puerto Rico. The Oriana Solar Park has debuted in the area of Isabela, with an estimated production of 100,000 megawatt-hours of energy in its first year of operations.

The Oriana Solar Park is the example of the future of power generation in Puerto Rico, one that is clean, renewable and diversified, not just dependent

on oil, according to Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello.

"In addition to producing renewable energy, this project creates jobs, which will help revitalize the economy of the area," he stated.

The project consists of more than 183,000 photovoltaic panels in two plots; it is expected to reduce the equivalent of the carbon dioxide emissions of 10,000 homes.

The Oriana Solar Park is the brainchild of Oriana Energy, a subsidiary of the Sonnedix Group, in association with Yarotek.

As part of the project, Oriana is also planting about 3,800 trees. "These power plants put Puerto Rico at the forefront in the use of renewable energy sources," said Yarotek President Samy Esayag. ■

Barbuda Is Looking to Go 100 Percent Green

The Eastern Caribbean island of Barbuda is looking to become a 100% green energy island. That's the plan behind the proposed Green Barbuda Energy project, which, if approved, would be supported by a regional grant from the government of the United Arab Emirates.

The project aims to move Barbuda away from fossil fuels and toward a mix of renewable energy technologies, primarily solar and wind power, backed up by modern battery storage.

Antigua and Barbuda government officials pitched the plan recently in a meeting with a representative of Masdar of the UAE to discuss the plans. The UAE is funding a \$50 million regional grant called the UAE – Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund, with a number of Caribbean countries having already submitted requests.

Masdar, Abu Dhabi's renewable energy company, would manage the technical implementation of the project.

A UAE team recently visited the APUA electricity plant in Codrington to obtain data on energy usage and visited possible sites for installation of green fuel facilities. ■



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ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

Behind the scenes

1. Setting up the refreshment area.
2. Coleen Skeet and Jeniffer Sankar-Sooknarine.
3. The notetakers in deep concentration.



3



ECLAC Caribbean recently hosted two major meetings in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago namely a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Acceleration Workshop, and the 18th Monitoring Committee meeting of the CDCC, both of which are featured earlier in this issue.

It was a rare opportunity for staff to gather together in the Commission's host country outside of the office. Here are some memories from those events. ■



4. Adanna Cudjoe (right) sampling some goodies during the coffee break.
5. Jeniffer Sankar-Sooknarine and Aurelie Quiatol preparing the interpretation equipment.
6. Runako Henry recording the day's proceedings.

Classic Island Pepper Shrimp

What you will need:

1 lb medium shrimp
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/3 teaspoon salt
1 heaping tablespoon corn starch
2 scotch bonnet peppers
3 cloves garlic
3 scallions
2 cups vegetable oil (for frying)
2 tablespoon vegetable oil



What you need to do:

1. Heat the oil for 'frying' on medium/high. Since the shrimp is coated with the cornstarch they may tend to stick together. Fry for a minute or so and set aside. (Don't over cook!)
2. In a new pan heat the 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil on a very low heat and then go in with the other ingredients. You want to gently allow the flavors of the garlic, scallions and scotch bonnet to blend together.
3. Cook on low for 3-5 minutes, then add the cooked shrimp and toss well to coat. Since it's important not to over cook the shrimp, as they heat through you can take the pot off the stove.

Serve warm for the best flavour.



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