Volume 9 - Issue 2

The Hummingbird

GEOSPATIAL TECHNOLOGIES

ECLAC & CCRIF JOINT WORKSHOPS ON EFFECTIVE APPLICATIONS SUPPORT OF DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

DIGITAL PUBLIC GOODS

PROMOTING ROBUST HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN THE CARIBBEAN SIDS

ECLAC CARIBBEAN

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About us

Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers 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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Please see our contact details on the back cover of this magazine.

International Days

11 February
International Day of Women and Girls in Science

20 February
World Day of Social Justice

21 February
International Mother Language Day

Upcoming Meetings

23 February
Caribbean Youth Dialogues 2022 - In preparation of the United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

24 February
Seminar on economic censuses in Latin America: experiences and innovations

4 March
Preparatory meeting of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement (PreCOP1)

Promoting robust human rights and governance frameworks for Digital Public Goods

Digital public goods (DPGs) play an important role in facilitating the full potential of digital technologies and data to advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, it is important that their deployment is performed in an inclusive manner. This means taking into consideration the diversity of the population who will be utilizing the services, and in particular, their capabilities and needs, as well as the openness, accessibility, and reusability of the digital commons.

Digital public goods can be described as public goods in the form of software, data sets, open standards, and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable laws and best practices, do no harm by design, and help attain the SDGs. A critical prerequisite to the successful consumption of DPGs is the deployment of appropriate governance frameworks to support human rights and enable effective and optimal utilization of the DPGs.

In the Caribbean, both the Roadmap for the CARICOM Single ICT Space (CTU, 2017) and the eLAC2022 Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2020), are well-positioned as platforms for cooperation on matters relating to governance of the emerging digital ecosystems. They seek to promote policy design, capacity-building and political dialogue on the challenges and opportunities that digital transformation creates for society and the economy of the region.

Through the strategic plans of government with the support of regional institutions and strategic plans, the Caribbean seems well-positioned to develop the necessary governance frameworks for advancing digital public infrastructure. This may be accomplished by engaging in collaborative dialogue and establishing mechanisms, which will ensure that digital public goods (DPGs) are deployed in a way that advances the subregion's development agenda.

Building out digital public infrastructure via DPGs is a compelling opportunity for countries with developing economies. However, doing so requires careful attention to a wide range of considerations across the full life cycle of DPGs, including their development, implementation, ongoing maintenance and oversight.

As the demand for DPGs grows and becomes more widespread, it is critical that ethical considerations, such as frameworks for governance and the protection of human rights be prioritized when designing and before deploying these goods. As such, effective due diligence by Governments is required to ensure that products, policies, practices and terms of service comply with human rights principle and standards.

With the increased deployment of digital public infrastructure and the digitizing of access to core public services, an individual's ability to participate fully in social, economic, and political life increasingly depends on their access to and facility with the digital ecosystem.

Therefore, without adequate governance frameworks to safeguard the rights of new and future digital natives, digital inclusion is unlikely to result in equitable social, economic and political inclusion (Gillwald & van der Spuy, 2019).

DPGs provide a platform for the development of public digital infrastructures with appropriate governance mechanisms that can mitigate the status quo of private dominance over digital spaces

(Behrends, Simons, Troy & Gupta, 2021).

Unlike traditional regulatory mechanisms, these governance frameworks should recognize the human rights implications of implementing DPGs at population scale and establish clear legal and regulatory mechanisms. Where necessary, these mechanisms can protect user rights, transparency, and ongoing structures of accountability over those who design, develop and control the digital platforms and public infrastructure.

Furthermore, these frameworks should be technology-neutral and sufficiently agile to adapt to changing demands and technological possibilities. Ultimately, they should be based on principles rather than detailed legislation, to reduce the need for constant updating of regulations, which is difficult to sustain in jurisdictions with limited capacity and resources, as is typical among the small island developing States of the Caribbean. ■

Saint Lucia increases gasoline and diesel prices

In Saint Lucia, the price of gasoline and diesel was increased in mid-March by EC $1.00 from $13.95 to $14.95 per gallon. Prime Minister, Philip Pierre, who is also Minister for Finance, Economic Development and the Youth Economy, recently announced that: "Government has decided to strike a balance between having to subsidize fuel and protecting the consumer from a very steep increase in prices at the pump."

The Prime Minister explained the rationale for increases in gasoline and diesel prices. "We believe this to be the best compromise at this time, which leaves the government with excise tax revenue of only 27 cents per gallon on gas and 19 cents per gallon on diesel, much less than the previous $4.00 excise tax budgeted.

"In these unfortunate times, the government remains committed to the prudent management of its finances, whilst endeavoring to mitigate the anticipated pressures of increases in imported goods. Consumers are therefore urged to adjust their consumption as much as possible to minimize the burden these prices increase will have on them."

Prime Minister Pierre continued that during the period June 2021 to present, the excise tax rates on gasoline dropped to an average of $2.26 per gallon and as low as $1.18 per gallon, significantly below the budgeted $4.00. Diesel excise tax rates dipped to an average of $3.96 and more recently to $1.84 per gallon. Subsidies on the 20 pound and 22-pound cylinders of cooking gas (LPG) averaged $13.08 and $14.38 per cylinder respectively, during the same period.

As a result, Excise Tax revenue collected on gasoline and diesel minus the subsidy of $9.5 million on cooking gas is expected to amount to $24 million in the fiscal year 2021/22. This means that approximately $22 million less revenue was collected when compared to the $46 million budgeted in the year 2021/2022.

Collections from the excise tax on gasoline and diesel are needed to finance government operations, including the provision of supplies to hospitals and health facilities, the management of COVID-19, and the provision of educational equipment and supplies. ■

The Hummingbird

JOINT ECLAC CARIBBEAN AND CCRIF WORKSHOPS

on effective applications of geospatial technologies and data in support of disaster risk management

The Caribbean is highly vulnerable to several natural hazards. To significantly reduce the negative impacts caused by these hazards, the subregion needs to develop a holistic disaster risk management strategy which include mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery plans.

Read More

Joint ECLAC Caribbean and CCRIF workshops on effective applications of geospatial technologies and data in support of disaster risk management

Geospatial technologies and data (GST/D) are the tools necessary for effective disaster risk management (DRM). These technologies can be applied to capture images, information, and data at all stages of the DRM cycle. The application of GST/D in DRM provide for informed decision-making, facilitates and encourages a more systematic and integrated approach to data collection, data storage and data retrieval capabilities.

ECLAC Caribbean and CCRIF SPC (Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company) jointly organized two virtual training workshops in 2021, on "Policy issues towards effective applications of geospatial technologies and data in support of disaster risk management in the Caribbean".

The workshops catered to public sector policy and technical officials with responsibilities for DRM, geospatial technology specialists, and disaster risk managers. The trainings were in keeping with ECLAC Caribbean's dedicated support to the Caribbean in building national and subregional capacities in the applications of GST/D in DRM.

ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, in welcoming delegates to the workshops, noted their importance in addressing the Caribbean's vulnerability. Among these were recent experiences with natural events such as the volcanic eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the recent earthquake in Haiti, several recent tropical cyclones and flooding events in the subregion.

The first workshop was designed for senior technical officers having responsibilities in selecting and using technologies to support DRM.

These participants were shown how to:

- Provide applications of GST/D to support decision making in DRM.

- Identify capacity development issues needed to enhance mainstreaming of GST/D in DRM.

> *Geospatial technologies and data (GST/D) are the tools necessary for effective disaster risk management (DRM)*

• Examine global guidelines to improve the support to risk management through the use of GST/D.

• Identify policies and governance requirements for GST/D.

• Identify financial mechanisms and regional technical cooperation required to harness the full benefit of GST/D.

The second workshop was designed for technical officers responsible for GIS and application developers supporting DRM. Participants at this session learnt about:

• Applications of geospatial technologies and data in DRM. Identification and addressing data and data management requirements in DRM.

• Examining the current state of geospatial technologies available to support DRM.

• Identification of human capacity needs to enhance mainstreaming of geospatial technologies and data (GST/D) in DRM.

• Identification of areas for regional technical cooperation supporting GST/D with applications in DRM.

Represented at the workshops were ECLAC Caribbean member States, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, and associate members, Sint Maarten and Turks and Caicos Islands. A wide range of regional DRM institutions, development partners and agencies of the UN system also participated. ■

Women's autonomy, gender equality and the building of a care society discussed at regional conference

Government Ministers and high-level authorities of national mechanisms for the advancement of women in Latin America and the Caribbean recently reaffirmed their commitment on improving gender equality. This was done at the virtually held, 62nd Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women, organized by ECLAC in coordination with UN Women.

The high-level authorities vowed to take all necessary measures to accelerate the effective implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda and the international commitments related to gender equality, the autonomy of women, adolescents and girls and the full guarantee of their human rights.

They also committed to mainstreaming the gender perspective into national environmental, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction policies, initiatives, and programmes.

During the intergovernmental meeting, the special session of the Regional Consultation prior to the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) was held, during which the participants reiterated their commitment to the urgency of accelerating progress towards gender equality and ensuring the exercise of the human rights of women, adolescents and girls in all their diversity.

As a result of the consultation session, a Declaration was adopted and will be presented at the CSW66 as a forward-looking position and contribution of the region to the global multilateral debate.

The CSW66, scheduled for 14 to 25 March 2022, has as its priority theme, "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes."

The Declaration demonstrates, once again, the enormous capacity for dialogue and agreement of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, to promote the commitments of the Regional Gender Agenda as a contribution to the deliberations of the CSW66.

In this context, the Declaration approved by the Ministers and high-level authorities, is aimed at promoting the effective protection of the rights of all women human rights defenders, particularly those working on issues related to the environment, land, and natural resources. It also reaffirms the commitment to address the resilience of women, adolescents, and girls in a comprehensive manner, as well as the need to

integrate a gender perspective in international climate and disaster risk reduction funding, ensure greater access to such funding by developing countries, including funding for women's and feminist organizations.

The Declaration cements the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean are at the forefront of gender equality and the advancement of women's economic, physical, and decision-making autonomy, to overcome the structural challenges of gender inequality and achieve sustainable development.

Together with the Agreements of the 62nd Presiding Officers, it also reaffirm the centrality of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean as the main intergovernmental forum in the region for the advancement of an ambitious and comprehensive Regional Gender Agenda.

An Agenda that is the result of the work carried out over the last 40 years by Governments, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international organizations, academia, and civil society organizations, particularly feminist and women's organizations.

The Governments also agreed to request Chile, in its capacity as Chair of the Presiding Officers, and Argentina, in its capacity as Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women representing the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), to present the Declaration at CSW66, held in March 2022.

At the Conference, ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, said that Latin America and the Caribbean has the potential to become a region that transforms and promotes gender equality and women's autonomy in international decision-making spaces, and in the adoption of measures and financing related to the environment, climate change, disaster risk management and reduction, and sustainable development.

She added that we are facing a genuine shift in era with global challenges such as climate change, inequality, the growing asymmetries between developed and developing countries, and today, the pandemic. "All of this requires a profound transformation that recognizes the links between the economy, society, and the environment, and that promotes greater multilateral cooperation at the global and regional levels," she said.

As part of the Regional Consultation, two panels were organized to present the background documents prepared for the CSW66 priority theme.

The first panel, entitled "Gender equality, women's empowerment, and climate change policies" presented the background document "Women's empowerment and gender equality at the heart of climate action in Latin America and the Caribbean." This document analyzes the structural challenges of gender inequality and climate change, gender mainstreaming in the climate change policy framework, progress at the regional level, and priority areas for regional action from a gender and women's empowerment perspective.

The second panel, under the theme, "Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies" presented the document "Towards Gender Equality and Women's Leadership for Disaster Risk Resilience in Latin America and the Caribbean." This document identifies the scope of the inclusion of the gender approach and women's empowerment in the context of disaster risk reduction in the region, and develops guiding principles and action-oriented recommendations based on evidence, good practices, and lessons learned.

In this context, it is important to mention that Latin America and the Caribbean are highly sensitive to the effects of climate change and disaster risk. In addition, the region has been the most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CSW66 takes place in a context of growing urgency and demands to address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and environmental pollution, as well as to address disaster risk reduction by putting gender equality and women's empowerment and autonomy at the center.

The 62nd Meeting also provided an opportunity to present the preparatory activities for the XV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place in Argentina in November 2022, and whose central theme will be, "The care society: horizon for a sustainable recovery with gender equality."

In addition, the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean reported on the implementation of the Regional Alliance for Women's Digitalization in Latin America and the Caribbean and on national initiatives, and the Regional Fund to support Women's and Feminist Organizations and Movements, of which UN Women is the managing entity.

Government representatives also listened to the contribution made by the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations on the Status of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (NGO CSW LAC), which presented the Declaration of the Forum of Women and Feminist NGOs in preparation for CSW66. ■

Integrated water resources management challenges in the Caribbean SIDS

Water is a key driver of economic and social development, and it is also critical to maintaining the integrity of the natural environment and ecosystems. Sustainable management of water resources, including access to safe, fresh water and sanitation, is indispensable for human health and well-being.

In the Caribbean and other regions, the sustainable management of freshwater resources requires integrated and systematized structures across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development.

Optimal sustainable management of freshwater resources requires a coordinated multi-stakeholder and multisectoral approach. Integrated water resources management (IWRM) describes a holistic approach to the management of water, land, ecosystems and related natural resources, with a view to maximizing economic and social welfare in an equitable manner (GWP, 2006).

A new study from ECLAC Caribbean examines IWRM as it relates to policy interventions in areas including recommendations for potable water management arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. In each of the countries considered in this study (the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago), the requirement for an effective IWRM organizational structure was identified as significant and the study lays out such a structure.

The study concludes that public health efforts to effectively control the spread of COVID-19 in Caribbean countries have revealed the complex interaction among human, economic and natural systems and the systemic nature of risk. Management measures to suppress the spread of the Covid-19 virus require that citizens have sustained access to acceptable amounts of potable water.

Having resilient water security systems are essential for mitigating future pandemics. This is also a requirement in the post-pandemic recovery and rebuilding phases. The strengthening of water security measures is essential for preventing and combatting future pandemics and other water-borne communicable diseases.

To support compliance with the COVID-19 public-health protocols, the study notes that Governments took actions

in providing nationwide access to potable water. All examined countries decided to address potable water distribution as an essential service. There was additional facilitation for online bill payments, arrangements to defer payments, and deferred disconnections to support these actions.

Further, in the case of The Bahamas, customers who were disconnected before the pandemic were reconnected as a measure to provide access to potable water. Additional services were provided to support communities with truck-borne potable water supplies. Also, targeted COVID-19 educational and awareness campaigns were delivered to communities served from communal WASH facilities.

In conclusion, the study makes two important policy recommendations for IWRM and COVID-19 pandemic management. First, it must be established that IWRM is a component of the National COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan. This arrangement should include having policies to support ministerial and inter-agency coordination, thereby providing timely and informed decision making. And second, IWRM systems should include operational and recovery plans to address the COVID-19 pandemic. This arrangement should aim to provide continuous monitoring, assessment, and reporting of the quantity and quality of freshwater resources. ■

Challenges in plastic waste recycling drive new business opportunities

A decrease in revenue from plastic waste exports – coupled with the increasing cost of doing business – has made it almost mandatory for Antigua and Barbuda to find innovative ways to recycle items normally thrown away.

"Maybe 10 years ago, we were getting 15 cents a pound for plastic grind, we are only getting about three or four cents a pound right now," shared Mario Bento, Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Waste Recycling Corporation (ABRWC).

"Increasing freight and handling charges, oil prices are going up and this is becoming a bigger and bigger problem every day, so it's making less and less sense to be exporting recyclable materials from the island."

He said that it is also difficult to find export markets for the country's plastic waste, the bulk of which otherwise ends up at the landfill site. In 2017, for example, China banned the import of most plastic garbage, forcing a decline in the global plastic waste trade.

"The model previously was that we collected material, we compacted them, grind them up and then we ship everything to China. This was no longer an option, so we really need to find innovative ways to keep recycling," Bento explained.

So, what's the solution? Well, ABWRC is considering implementing a plastic bottle refund policy – similar to the one undertaken by the Ministry of Health last year – as a way to reduce waste. Customers would receive a small fee for recycling their plastic containers once this goes into effect. The expectation is that it will increase recycling rates in the country.

Another idea is to manufacture items such as furniture from plastic instead of exporting it. One expert believes that the solution can begin by trying to understand the source of waste, to qualify and quantify it, and then to prevent it from entering the oceans.

Marine Project Officer at the National Union for Conservation of Nature, Joao Sousa, explained that to do this, "we must calculate how much plastic, and in which format and quantity, is generated by each sector; what can be recycled to create new value chains and products; and identify what can be done with the plastics that cannot be recycled. All the plastic in the ocean was once in our hands and we just let it slip."

The entire aim is to stimulate the economy through employment, using inorganic waste to create circular economy solutions by supporting economically viable projects. ■

Proposal to establish a Caribbean Resilience Fund

In 2020, all Caribbean economies excepting Guyana contracted due to the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Guyana's economy expanded because of the commencement of production from its vast offshore oil fields. Early forecasts for 2021 predict a return to growth for almost all Caribbean economies but this does not return the region to the 2019 level of income. There are downside risks to these forecasts depending on vaccination levels, the further spread of the disease across the globe and in the Caribbean, and the recovery of tourism.

Taking these factors into consideration, ECLAC Caribbean gave more indepth consideration to the shaping of a Caribbean Resilience Fund; an effort integral to the operaionalization of its Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative. This article presents some of the elements of the Fund along with analyses of a few areas it proposes to address, such as structural challenges, high-debt, low growth, and vulnerability.

It is acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the subregion's vulnerability to the vagaries of global aggregate demand and commodity prices. This in turn, has largely driven the subregion's debt upwards and dampened economic growth before its onset, compromising its economic performance and further decelerating the subregion's growth in 2020.

The economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has brutally exposed the Caribbean's endemic structural challenges and rigidities which predated its advent. At least four areas of significant structural challenges can be identified where considerable structural transformation is necessary.

These challenges are: (1) Macroeconomic imbalances manifested through slow growth and high debt levels, (2) Low and declining productivity and competitiveness unmasked by low rankings in international Ease of Doing Business indices, the high cost of transport and energy, (3) Human development challenges

show up in high levels of poverty and unemployment, particularly among the youth, as well as increased crime rates, and (4) Environmental challenges evidenced by the high annual cost of natural disasters and the vulnerability to climate change.

These four areas can be described as the significant areas of vulnerability facing the Caribbean. However, a further two cross-cutting challenges are also present, which are the intractable implementation gap and the sub-optimal subregional cooperation to address many of these shared challenges.

To provide some background insight, it should be recalled that the Caribbean has experienced a significant rise in living standards, incomes, and social welfare since many countries gained independence during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. During the years immediately following independence, policymakers focused on providing much-needed infrastructure, healthcare, and education.

However, COVID-19 impacts had severe consequences for the subregion's already declining economic growth and competitiveness. The pandemic has hit the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at a time when they were still recovering from the impacts of the 2007/2009 global financial crisis. Coupled with the challenges of climate change and extreme weather events, these overlapping crises have led to a steady deterioration in the fortunes of Caribbean economies and social outcomes.

This highlights the severe vulnerability of Caribbean countries and the need to build resilience. However, resilience building requires financing. ECLAC has therefore proposed the establishment of a CRF, which would essentially be a special purpose financing vehicle intended to leverage long-term low-cost development financing for the Caribbean. The CRF would also ensure the availability of resources to the Caribbean for investment in adaptation.■

No more tests needed to enter Curaçao

Persons traveling to Curaçao no longer need to be tested, as announced in a press release recently by the government. However, a digital Passenger Locator Card (PLC) must still be completed.

Therefore, the previously implemented PCR and antigen tests for persons entering the country are no longer necessary. "Persons traveling to Curaçao only have to fill in the PLC. This means that one no longer needs to take any Covid-19 test to travel to Curaçao," the statement said.

In the last few weeks, measures on the island have been further scaled down, and visitors from the CAS (Curaçao, Aruba and Sint Maarten) and BES (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba) islands no longer had to be tested.

Meanwhile, Bonaire has relaxed the conditions for travellers from the BES islands. As of mid-February, fully vaccinated travellers from the CAS islands no longer need to take a PCR test to come to Bonaire.

However, travellers from those islands that are not fully vaccinated or unvaccinated must take a PCR test within 48 hours before departure or an antigen test within 24 hours before departure. Travellers from the BES islands will only need to complete a health declaration.

Due to the Omicron variant, Bonaire had tightened the travel conditions for visitors to the island since December 2021. The travel conditions are adjusted according to the situations. On the BES and CAS islands, the Omicron peak is now over, according to the statement. ■

Belize makes effort to reclaim beaches and restore coral reefs

The government of Belize is pioneering coral transplantation and beach reclamation efforts in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, located in the southern part of the island.

San Pedro was the setting of the first face-to-face meeting in two years of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government, for its 33rd Inter-Sessional Summit, held in early March.

The heavy agenda items, including the COVID-19 pandemic, regional security, the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), food security and agricultural production, almost seemed incongruous with the leisurely nature of the island.

Chairman of CARICOM, the Honourable John Briceno, Prime Minister of Belize, beamed with pride as he welcomed his colleagues to the 'La Isla Bonita,' translated from Spanish to English as 'beautiful Island.'

He said Pedro Town, a major tourist attraction, epitomizes beauty and leisure, however, San Pedro is under threat from climate change, and other socio-economic challenges.

Part of the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (BBRRS) that makes up one of UNESCO's World Heritage sites, Prime Minister Briceno said it is a microcosm of the vulnerabilities that small island and low-lying coastal states face as a result of climate change, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Beaches here are eroding because of rising sea levels; the Belize Barrier Reef is struggling due to coral bleaching; and a growing population is testing the limits of the island's capacity," the Belizean Prime Minister stated.

He said the COVID-19 pandemic dealt a devastating blow to San Pedro's lucrative tourism industry, but the resilient people did not succumb. They pivoted to their traditional economic activity, fishing, which is rebounding due to efforts to sustain the island's marine ecosystem.

"Pioneering coral transplantation is restoring the reef, and a herculean beach reclamation project is underway," he said, adding that the country is adapting to and mitigating against the threats of climate change.

"We are spending millions to meet these crises because we must, even though we did little to cause them. Unfair, yes. The harsh reality of the 21st century." ■

Welcome to Ella Gaspard

The ECLAC Caribbean family warmly welcomes Ella Gaspard, our newest Programme Management Assistant, in the Economic Development Unit (EDU) from February 2022.

Ella brings to ECLAC over 10 years of experience in administrative, operational, and programmatic support. She held many administrative positions, most recently with United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) as Programme Clerk. She also previously worked with the Land Settlement Agency as a Business Operations Assistant, and with the Delegation of the European Union to Trinidad as a Project Executive Assistant.

Ella also served as an Executive Assistant with Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) and as an Administrative Assistant with Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre.

She holds a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Bedfordshire, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Hertfordshire and a Certificate in Public Administration from The University of the West Indies.

Please join the Hummingbird in welcoming Ella onboard! ■

The Denver Omelet

Prep: 10 mins
Cook: 10 mins
Servings: 1

What you will need:

- 3 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ¼ cup diced smoked ham
- 2 tablespoons diced onion
- 2 tablespoons diced green bell pepper
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper

How to Make it:

Step 1: Beat eggs in a small bowl until just combined; do not overbeat.

Step 2: Melt butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add ham, onion, and bell pepper; season with salt and pepper. Cook and stir until onions soften and ham begins to caramelize, about 5 minutes.

Step 3: Reduce heat to medium-low and pour in eggs. Mix briefly with a spatula while shaking the pan to ensure ingredients are evenly distributed. Quickly run the spatula along edges of omelet. Sprinkle Cheddar cheese and cayenne pepper over omelet.

Step 4: Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until top is still wet but not runny, about 5 minutes. Use a spatula to fold omelet in half and transfer it to a plate.

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