



PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW

ECLAC LAUNCHES THE
PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW
OF THE CARIBBEAN 2017

ADVOCATING FOR GRANTS

FOR HURRICANE-STRICKEN
CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

2020 CENSUS

IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED FOR
THE NEXT
ROUND OF CENSUSES



UNITED NATIONS

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

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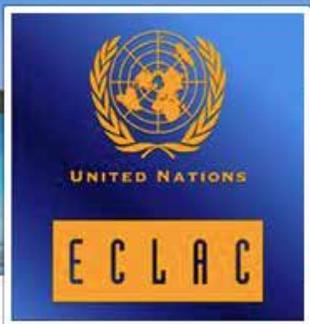
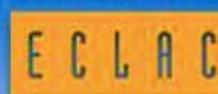
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ECLAC CARIBBEAN



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1 January 2018

22-24

Promoting Carbon Markets in Latin America and the Caribbean, High Level Regional Dialogue on Carbon Pricing and MRV in the Americas, Santiago.
22 - 24 January 2018

24-25

Regional Seminar Bioeconomy in Latin America and the Caribbean 2018, Santiago.
24 - 25 January 2018

27

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust
27 January 2018



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Dec 14

World Economic Situation and Prospects for 2018-2019. Learn about the economic prospects for the global economy in 2018-2019

World Economic
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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Dec 12

The 'One Planet Summit' aims at promoting green projects and providing new funding sources to accelerate common effort to fight climate change.



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Nov 28

#ECLACaribbean has established a task force to advance ECLAC's Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative.



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ECLAC HIGHLIGHTS BENEFITS OF DEBT SWAP PROPOSAL AT PLEDGING CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK

ECLAC's Debt For Climate Adaptation Swap Proposal was recently presented as a possible recovery mechanism for the Caribbean countries which suffered severe damage from by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in late 2017.

Speaking at a high-level pledging conference held in late 2017 in New York, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, underscored that the organization has been championing this debt swap proposal, which was specially crafted to address the crippling debt of Caribbean economies and their need to generate the resources needed to finance resilience building measures.

The conference, entitled 'Building a more Climate Resilient Community', was convened by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), in an effort to mobilise international financial support for those hurricane-stricken countries.

Quarless noted that ECLAC has undertaken substantive research and focused economic assessments of the challenge which climate change poses to the economies of the Caribbean across a range of sectors, including agriculture, freshwater, health and tourism. In doing so, ECLAC has provided a framework complete with data, parameters and other measures that can be used to inform economic policy dialogue in responding to this challenge over the medium term.

Quarless also described the actions taken in the five countries for which ECLAC conducted its Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) methodology following Irma and Maria – namely Anguilla, the Bahamas, British Virgin

Islands, Sint Maarten and the Turks and Caicos Islands. "We are resolved to collect the data that present the most accurate picture of the degree of the subregion's vulnerability to extreme climatic events", she stated.

"The most vulnerable are already facing the impact of climate change. It is estimated that 70% of the beaches in the subregion are losing shoreline at a rate of between one quarter and nine meters each year. This is more serious when you consider that about 70% of Caribbean populations, dwellings and infrastructure are situated on low-elevation coastal zones", she added.

Quarless underscored that the upper middle and high-income classification of the majority of Caribbean countries poses a number of challenges, among which the most important are limited access to concessional external finance and a decline



CARIBBEAN LEADERS LAUNCH AMBITIOUS PLAN TO CREATE THE WORLD'S FIRST “CLIMATE-SMART ZONE”

of official development assistance to the Caribbean. She noted that Gross Domestic Production (GDP) per capita criteria fail to take into account threats from natural disasters such as hurricanes as well as economic shocks.

In this context, ECLAC's debt swap proposal for the Caribbean can assist these economies with mitigation and adaptation to the consequences of climate change, while trying to reduce their debt burden, increase growth and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. ■

The 2017 hurricane season has left unprecedented devastation across the Caribbean. Cognizant that communities and towns have been decimated, and the global community has recognized the need to act quickly and give generously to relieve suffering and help rebuild. It is in this vein that Caribbean leaders recently announced the launch of a new public-private initiative known as The Caribbean Climate-Smart Coalition.

The Coalition seeks to reinvigorate the islands that have been impacted by recent hurricanes Irma and Maria, and to help build more resilient infrastructure and communities across the region as the likelihood of future extreme weather events increases.

The establishment of the Coalition was announced at the One Planet Summit hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris to review progress made on the Paris Agreement adopted by global governments two years ago. According to members of the

Coalition – who include the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank - with the right domestic and international reforms, the world can step up – and help unleash the means to catalyse an ambitious US \$8 billion investment plan to bring greater energy and infrastructure resilience to 3.2 million Caribbean households.

This would help Caribbean islands to eliminate their costly dependency on fossil fuels so that they can meet close to 100% percent of their energy needs from renewable sources, and to embed resilience into communities and livelihoods to realise the bold ambitions of all Caribbean people.

The policy advises property owners who have received prior approval less than three years ago to proceed to build in accordance with the approval with no further action necessary from the Planning Authority. This approach will aid in moving persons more quickly towards a greater state of normalcy. ■



ADVOCATING FOR GRANTS FOR HURRICANE-STRICKEN CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

The impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on some Windward Islands of the Caribbean and their efforts at rebuilding were the focus of discussion at a recent debate in the Netherlands, at the 25th instalment of 'Doing Business between the Netherlands, Dutch Caribbean and South-America Trade Mission and Congress'.

ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, attended the event and enriched the debate by providing insights into the preliminary findings of disaster assessments carried out by ECLAC in several of the hurricane-hit islands.

Quarless underscored that one of the main challenges faced by the islands is a general lack of resources to rebuild better,

since rebuilding in a sustainable manner comes at a high cost. In this regard, she emphasized the need for more financial grants to be provided to facilitate this process.

Participants from Anguilla, British Virgin Islands (BVI), Sint Maarten and Saint Eustatius, shared their stories of Hurricanes Irma and Maria and the immense damage their respective islands sustained. The event also encouraged intense discussion on the reconstruction initiatives and development aid.

BVI Minister of Trade and Investment, Marlin Penn, reported that the BVI had suffered extensive damage estimated at US \$3.6 billion. The public infrastructure, including the overhead

electricity distribution system, roads and several schools, were badly damaged. He echoed Quarless' statement that reconstruction funds, especially in the form of grants, are more necessary than loan assistance. "It is important to rebuild in a sustainable manner so the BVI can withstand future hurricanes. However, there is no money to put the electricity lines underground on the entire island, as this is a very expensive undertaking," Penn stated.

Representatives from other islands gave similar accounts, outlining the severe damage suffered and the financial challenges faced for rebuilding, given the loss of tourism revenue and employment opportunities. ■



BVI INTRODUCES POST-HURRICANE INTERIM RECONSTRUCTION POLICY

“

It is important to rebuild in a sustainable manner so the BVI can withstand future hurricanes...

Minister of Trade and Investment of The British Virgin Islands, the Hon. Marlin Penn

”

The government of the British Virgin Islands (BVI) has introduced a post-Irma interim reconstruction policy to help its residents rebuild expeditiously. In late November 2017, Premier Dr Orlando Smith said, “I am quite anxious to see people move back into their homes and this means that everyone including our young people and seniors will feel comfortable and secure again.”

Smith said he is excited about this policy, as it will streamline the procedure for processing applications for reconstruction making it easier for the applicants. The policy also outlines guidelines for reconstruction including construction details to reduce potential damage to infrastructure from future Category 5 hurricanes.

In anticipation of a large number of applications for reconstruction, the Premier assured that all applications submitted prior to November 2017 will be processed as soon as possible, taking into consideration the available resources. ■



FEATURE ARTICLE

ECLAC LAUNCHES THE
PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW
OF THE CARIBBEAN 2017



At the recent launch of the Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, Dr Dillon Alleyne, Deputy Director of ECLAC, Port of Spain, reviewed the Macroeconomic performance of the regional economies in 2017 and outlined projections for 2018.

[READ MORE](#)





ECLAC launches the Preliminary Overview of the Caribbean 2017

Following the launch, he sat down for a one-on-one with the Hummingbird.

Q: The main topic on everyone's lips right now is the recent hurricanes – Irma and Maria – which caused devastation for several countries in the Caribbean. What has been the impact of these disasters on the subregion's economies?

The preliminary estimates of damage from these hurricanes range from 80% to 200% of GDP. There were also many intra-regional effects of the hurricanes in the Caribbean, such as closure of the Princess Juliana Airport in Sint Maarten, which is a regional hub as well as the damage in Florida affecting the flow of reconstruction supplies. Despite these events, there has been some economic growth.

Q: Please enlighten us.

The overall real growth in the subregion was 0.9% in 2017, up from 0.5% in 2016. Growth among the service producers was 1.0%, while growth among the goods producers was 0.6%. The highest growth in 2017 was seen in Antigua and Barbuda, despite the impact of hurricane Irma, and the largest contraction was recorded in Dominica, which was arguably the ECLAC Member State most impacted by last year's hurricane season.

Q: What is the latest on the region's high public debt?

Public debt remained at approximately 70% of GDP on average. Jamaica and Barbados had the highest debt in the region, but were among those Member States with the largest declines in public debt. The largest increases in public debt were recorded in Belize, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago (T&T).

Q: What about the prospects for 2018?

In 2018, average GDP growth is expected to increase to 2.8%. The goods producers will grow by 1.8% while the service producers will grow by 3.3%. Downside risks to the prospects to 2018 include the de-risking phenomenon, high debt, threats to the offshore financial centres, external shocks, increasing environmental effects and continuing low commodity prices.

Q: Trinidad and Tobago's economy is said to be in dire straits due to the drop in oil prices. What is the outlook specifically for T&T?

Economic growth in T&T is expected to contract by 2.3% in 2017 and grow by 0.5% in 2018. The modest rebound anticipated in 2018 is based on a slow increase in gas supply and a small increase in oil prices in early 2018. While the development of new gas fields is welcome, the short term situation remains a challenge. For this reason, policy makers will have to examine the options beyond oil and gas sector in order to return to robust growth in the medium term. In this period of deficit financing, it is advisable for government to accumulate debt only with respect to productive investment and not to finance consumption activities.

Q: What could be done to help improve the situation?

There are three suggestions for the medium-term growth. First, tax compliance should be improved through tax reform. Second, new sectors and activities should be promoted and local value added in key sectors should be increased. Third, a Public Expenditure Review (PER) should be pursued to help rationalise

public expenditure. The purpose of a PER is to integrate government's priorities with spending. This is very important as it avoids the tendency, in an economic downturn, to cut spending indiscriminately and without careful assessment of the effectiveness and impact of such cuts. The PER can help identify areas which do not provide value for money and where cost savings are significant with a reallocation of functions.

Q: Any other recommendations moving forward?

Dominica and Barbuda, and indeed the wider Caribbean, must be rebuilt as a climate resilient region, with green industry projects and housing that can withstand stronger hurricanes. ECLAC's debt for climate adaptation swap proposal can be part of this, as it proposes using pledged climate funds to write down debt and allow for the creation of a fund that finances climate adaptation and resilience activities.

Q: In what other ways will ECLAC continue to support the subregion?

ECLAC has promoted a three-pronged Development strategy for the medium term, which consists of the following. First, support sustainable industrial policy design aimed at economic restructuring to enable entry into more dynamic sectors and activities. Second, address structural bottlenecks and capacity constraints by exploring innovative means of financing and improving access to information. Third, identify ways to improve the environment for business and identify institutional mechanisms that encourage greater engagement between the sector and government. ■



GRENADA IS CARIBBEAN DESTINATION OF 2017

Grenada, the Spice island of the Caribbean, ended 2017 on a high note with more international recognition. The three-island destination which includes Carriacou and Petite Martinique is celebrating its capture of two prestigious titles in the Caribbean Journal's Travel Awards 2017.

Grenada was named 'Destination of the Year 2017', and Chief Executive Officer of the Grenada Tourism Authority (GTA) Patricia Maher was named Caribbean Tourism Director of the Year 2017.

Grenada was chosen as a result of achieving one of the fastest tourism growth rates in the Caribbean, with an attendant surge in hotel development – with properties like the Kimpton Kawana Bay and Silversands in the pipeline – and due to the success of a new branding push to bring travelers to pieces of paradise that have long been among the Caribbean's most underrated destinations.

"I wish to thank the GTA team who have been working hard to ensure that the world discovers and enjoys our islands. We appreciate all our public and private stakeholders who work along with us to create memorable experiences and the Grenadian people for their warm hospitality," Maher said. Grenada was also recently featured in several major publications. Travel and Leisure Magazine recognized the destination as number three out of the 50 best places to travel in 2018.

The Hummingbird extends its warmest congratulations to Grenada for this signal achievement! ■



ECLAC SUPPORTS SDGS IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP FOR JAMAICA

The Government of Jamaica, with support from ECLAC Caribbean, has outlined a roadmap for the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the framework of Agenda 2030. This was announced by Jamaica's Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, at the recent Dialogue for Development lecture series and launch of the SDG public education campaign, hosted by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), at the University of the West Indies (UWI) regional headquarters in Mona, Jamaica. PM Holness endorsed the Jamaican roadmap as a signal that the country's principal planning documents, including

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

Vision 2030 Jamaica and the Medium-term Socio-economic Policy Framework (MTF), are aligned with Agenda 2030. He underscored the Government's commitment to fulfilling the SDG targets, as a "very powerful and comprehensive" framework for capturing what governments globally should endeavour to achieve for their countries.

In opening the Dialogue for Development lecture series, entitled "The Jamaica We Want: Vision 2030 Jamaica advancing the SDGs... leaving no one behind", ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, described Jamaica as trailblazer. "There are no more than three Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries that can boast of having shaped a national development strategy through a process of participation and consensus building that is so effectively aligned to the sustainable development framework of Agenda 2030. And so Jamaica has taken ownership of the SDGs in a very real way," Quarless said.

Among the key focus areas of Jamaica's SDG roadmap are eradicating hunger and

poverty; affording access to quality education, healthcare, clean water and sanitation, clean and affordable energy; reducing gender and other inequalities; facilitating climate change adaptation, economic growth and the creation of decent jobs as well as the development of industry and infrastructure. In this context, PM Holness emphasized that priorities must reflect the themes of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, "in our thrust to leave no one behind and transition Jamaica into a truly sustainable, just and equitable future, leading to prosperity for all".

The event also featured a presentation by Ambassador Dessima Williams, former Special Adviser on the Implementation of Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) to the President of the 71st UN General Assembly, as well as Former Ambassador of Grenada. In her presentation Ambassador Williams outlined the strong synergies that exist between the SDGs and each of the four goals of Jamaica's 2030 Vision, highlighting

existing challenges and opportunities for achieving a prosperous future for all Jamaicans. Ambassador Williams also underscored the importance of statistical data for monitoring and measuring SDG implementation, and discussed possible avenues for addressing the data challenge.

World leaders adopted the 17 SDGs of the Agenda 2030 at a historic United Nations Summit, in September 2015. This transformative development agenda that declares that no one will be left behind, will address a range of critical challenges, including efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change. ■



THE FUTURE OF WORK IN THE CARIBBEAN

In 2018, one of ECLAC Caribbean's priorities will continue to be the provision of support for member States and associate member countries towards ensuring a decent work environment with a rights-based approach. This is key for achieving equality and sustainable development, and is therefore a critical issue for the Caribbean.

For ECLAC, planning for the future based on demographic scenarios has been a long-standing priority. Combined with other factors, particularly those arising from government's economic and social decisions, the impact of population ageing and migration on labour markets in the subregion must be taken into account.

These and other important issues were shared by Associate Gender Affairs Officer, Lydia Rosa Gény, at a research consultation on the Future of Work, organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES), and held at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Saint Augustine, in Trinidad and Tobago in early December 2017. Gény touched upon recent ECLAC

studies on population ageing and migration, which were relevant to the discussion in so far as these issues have significant implications for the care economy, especially in terms of the demands for goods and services, housing, accessible transportation, social protection, as well as family structures and intergenerational ties.

"In relation to migration, based on the latest estimations of the United Nations, in 2015, almost 7.8 million Caribbean people were living in a national territory other than where they were born. It is also estimated that about 1.4 million international immigrants are in the subregion." In 2013, almost half (48 per cent) of international migrants originating in the Caribbean were females.

Gény underscored that this suggests that future job markets in the Caribbean will lose their demographic dividend/bonus and possible significant share of "skilled" and "higher-productivity" young labour. In addition, from the subregion the well-documented "brain drain" has seen increasing numbers of doctors, nurses, teachers and other qualified persons leaving to seek job opportunities in the North.

According to ECLAC's research, the number of older persons will almost double in the Caribbean by 2040, increasing from 1.2 million in 2015, representing 14% of the population to 2.1 million or 23% of the population. There is also the phenomenon of the 'feminization of ageing' with more females living longer than their male counterparts. This will likely generate significant pressure on public expenditure, including pensions systems and costs, healthcare and education.

Migration and the ageing of the population will also bring new opportunities for the future of work. Mechanisms should be established to facilitate the integration of migrants into the labour markets, with the recognition of their qualification, education and skills especially in the care economy, tourism, and lifelong learning systems. It is also important to rethink the position of older persons in society and the economy, especially for those older persons who are able and willing to continue working beyond the statutory retirement age, with the adoption of flexible working hours and arrangements. ■



DISCUSSING THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION (GCM)

International migration presents significant challenges in the context of Caribbean development and the welfare of migrants. These include poor compliance by Caribbean countries with existing migration conventions, treaties and standards in some countries; and negative cultural perceptions that affect migrant women, children and other vulnerable migrant groups.

Such issues were the focus of discussions at the recent 'Sub-Regional Consultation towards the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)', hosted by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with financing from the European Union, with ECLAC support. The sub-regional consultation was held in November 2017 in anticipation of the adoption of

the Global Compact, which is intended to enhance international cooperation on the governance of migration by establishing a framework to address the challenges and opportunities posed by human mobility and all aspects of international migration.

The consultation was part of a global process that was launched with the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016). The Global Compact, once adopted, will be the first agreement on international migration concluded under the auspices of the United Nations. Representing ECLAC Caribbean were Deputy Director, Dillon Alleyne, and Associate Gender Affairs Officer, Lydia Rosa Gény.

Dr. Alleyne noted that migration is an inherent component of Caribbean societies and the United States is the main destination for

Caribbean emigrants. Based on the findings of the recently published ECLAC studies on 'Women Empowerment and Migration in the Caribbean', and the 'Outlook on International Migration in the Caribbean', ECLAC has actively advocated that migration be addressed in government policies and international agreements, highlighting the validity of the triad: migration, human rights and development.

"Our proposal on equality and development highlights that migration is not a problem nor does it involve threats; rather it is a common good, which could contribute to the reduction of inequality, the strengthening of resilience, and the reduction of asymmetries in a globalized world," Dr. Alleyne said. ■



HOW TRADE AGREEMENTS CAN BENEFIT THE CARIBBEAN

The challenges and capacity constraints faced in the subregion in exploiting trade opportunities provided by Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Partial Scope Agreements (PSAs) have been examined by ECLAC Caribbean in one of its latest studies.

FTAs and PSAs are usually designed to benefit signatory countries by removing barriers to trade, such as tariffs, thereby enabling opportunities for export-led growth under liberalised trade policy regimes.

Over the past two decades, Caribbean countries have entered into a number of trade arrangements which offer improved or preferential market access, including bilateral FTAs, PSAs and preferential trade arrangements. However, this has not resulted in trade expansion, neither has there been a significant decline in exports of the subregion's main commodities, such as sugar, rice and bananas.

ECLAC's study examines two trade agreements in particular, namely the CARIFORUM–EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), and the CARICOM–Columbia Trade Agreement.

Three countries – Belize, Suriname

and Trinidad and Tobago – were focused on in the study, which identifies the existing structural gaps that have hindered production diversification, export growth and trade performance under existing bilateral trade arrangements.

According to the findings of the study, these gaps stem from the initial number of products in the export basket, which expose export earning capacity to considerable volatility. In addition, since many of these products are primary commodities, they are vulnerable to the typical price cycles associated with trade.

The study notes that the recent export performance of all three countries under review makes a compelling case for export diversification with a view to introducing some degree of stability to export earnings. This proposed strategy should include products higher up the value chain, since these are generally subject to lower levels of market volatility when compared to primary commodities.

Recognizing the gaps and limitation in the region's ability to exploit trade opportunities, bodies such as the European Union have provided a significant amount of technical assistance to

build capacity at the national and subregional levels in recent years.

In this regard, attention has been given to the public sector, with particular attention to areas such as governance, policy and regulation modernization, institutional capacity development and human resource capacity building. Conversely, capacity building in the private sector has been limited.

The study underscores that if there is going to be any growth in exports and exploitation of trade opportunities, this will be achieved by the private sector. Support for the private sector entities through technical assistance is therefore essential. While improvement, in the enabling policy and regulatory environment are necessary for fostering an efficient and competitive private sector, they are by no means sufficient. The subregion's private sector faces a number of major challenges and constraints in exploiting opportunities created by the various FTAs.

Against this backdrop, the study informs the design of a strategic framework to address these challenges and constraints, with a view to creating a solid platform for export expansion and diversification. ■



TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED FOR ECLAC'S DEBT SWAPS PROPOSAL

ECLAC Caribbean recently established a task force to advance its Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap initiative, at a meeting held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The meeting provided a forum for avid discussion among a group of key Caribbean institutions including the CARICOM Secretariat, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the CARICOM Development Fund, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, as well as representatives from national institutions, including the Planning Institute of Jamaica. The Debt Swap proposal, which was first presented at ECLAC's Caribbean Development Roundtable in Saint Kitts and Nevis early in 2016, is a mechanism intended to address the crippling debt of the Caribbean and their need to generate the resources needed to finance resilience building measures.

It is an innovative strategy that involves harnessing concessionary flows to transform the debt of the region into a source of investment in resilience, while at the same time re-energizing growth and promoting economic transformation in the economies of the subregion, through investment in adaptation projects and green industries.

ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, stressed that the devastating impact of the recent superstorms on many countries in the Caribbean demonstrated the premise of the ECLAC initiative that the high debt of the subregion is to a significant degree the result of the vulnerability of Caribbean countries to extreme climatic events. ■



IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED FOR THE 2020 ROUND OF CENSUSES IN THE CARIBBEAN

The next round of censuses in the Caribbean, which is expected to take place from 2020-2022, presents an opportunity for generating relevant data for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators. Countries in the subregion are being urged to use the opportunity to strengthen their statistical systems while implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

These and other factors are some of the findings of a recently published ECLAC study on 'Planning for the 2020 round of censuses in the Caribbean'. ECLAC conducted a technical needs assessment survey (TNAS) of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of capacity building in preparation of the 2020 census round. The ECLAC study, therefore, analyzed the responses received from the Caribbean and provided some recommendations.

According to the study, many countries in the Caribbean are planning to make changes to their methodology for updating cartographic information, and for disseminating census data. However, the majority foresees difficulties in this process of cartographic updates, including updating digital information due to limited financial, technical, and human resources capacities.

Therefore, technical assistance and funding are needed to strengthen human and technical capacities, including in the procurement of new technologies and devices in order to effectively implement the proposed changes.

According to the findings of ECLAC's study, some countries are in the process of adopting a regional questionnaire to national needs. Some countries are also planning to introduce changes to the dwelling and household sections, to the population characteristics, including persons with disabilities, as well as to migration questions.

Other countries are planning to make changes regarding access to ICTs and digital literacy, including use of mobile phone, tablets, computer and internet; and almost all countries are in discussions concerning new topics to meet emerging national demand, such as pension and health coverage, remittances, health responsibilities for the care of children, sick or older persons, among others.

With the support of other partners, the study recommends that a uniform mechanism for reporting census results should also be adopted in the subregion.

As part of its support to the subregion, ECLAC remains committed to provide timely REDATAM training in the subregion, especially in the creation of web portals in order to facilitate broader access to data by the general public. Redatam is an acronym for REtrieval of DATA for small Areas by Microcomputer. The program uses a compressed hierarchical database, which can contain microdata and aggregated information with millions of records for persons, houses, city clocks or any geographical division of a country. These data can come from any combination of census, survey or other sources. ■

STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Antigua and Barbuda

ROMANIA OFFERS 20 NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

- Dec 17 -

The Government of Romania will make 20 full scholarships available to students from Antigua and Barbuda for the 2018 – 2019 academic year. A two member delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, headed by Ambassador-at-large, Daniela Gitman, met with Prime Minister Gaston Browne during a visit to promote Romania's candidacy to the United Nation's Security Council for the 2020-2021 mandate.

CDB APPROVES FUNDING

- Dec 18 -

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has approved funding to improve disaster resilience in Antigua and Barbuda's health and education sectors. The project foresees the instalment of solar photovoltaic systems for up to 13 rural schools and clinics. Priority has been given to those that provide services to the most vulnerable groups, communities, the poor, women and children, and which also provide shelter and make rescue and medical care possible in the event of a disaster.



Bahamas

OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION

- Dec 20 -

The electoral observation mission of the Organization of American States (OAS) presented a report to its Permanent Council on the general elections that took place in The Bahamas on May 2017. The report highlighted the openness and cooperation of authorities, parties, civic groups and the people of the country, and presented recommendations to improve processes. Chief of Mission, Sherry Tross, congratulated The Bahamas "on the steps it has taken to provide access to the vote to eligible citizens on election day."

IMF STAFF VISIT

- Dec 20 -

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team led by Fabian Valencia, Senior Economist, visited The Bahamas from December 12 to 18, 2017. The visit was meant to review the latest economic developments and lay the groundwork for the 2018 Article IV consultation (expected to take place in March 2018). The mission met with Peter Turnquest, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; John Rolle, Governor of the Central Bank of The Bahamas; as well as other government officials, and representatives of the private sector.



Dominica

PRIME MINISTER URGES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

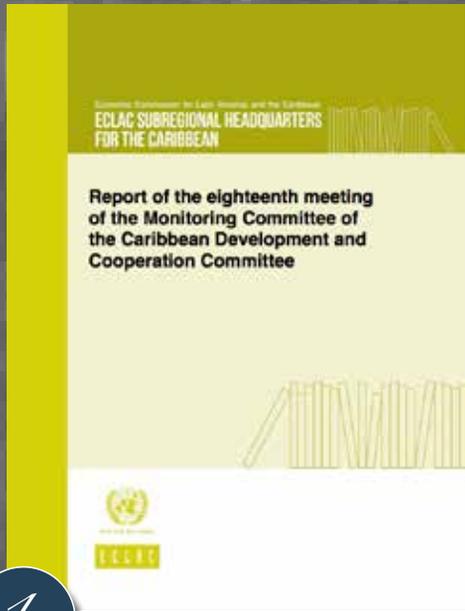
- Dec 12 -

Dominica's Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skerrit, called on the international community to scale up investments in building climate change resilience during the One Planet Summit in Paris, France last December. Skerrit noted, "In order to build resilience to climate change, island-states like Dominica require significant investments in residential and public buildings, infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, and utility services – water, electricity, telecommunications."

CDB SUPPORTS TRAINING

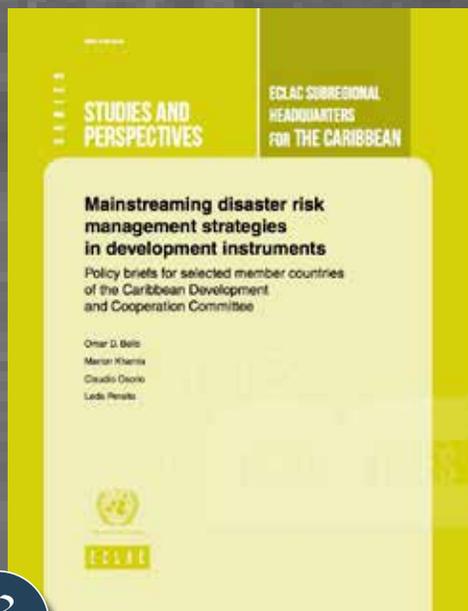
- Dec 20 -

Two hundred and thirty four Dominicans, 40 percent of them women, have completed the Rapid Training of Artisans programme, and are now better equipped with the skills they need to construct homes that can better withstand hurricanes. The Rapid Training of Artisans programme is funded through the Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services (CTCS) network of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The programme has enabled the training of artisans, and follows a similar initiative implemented with notable results in Grenada immediately after the 2004 passing of Hurricane Ivan.



1.

Report of the eighteenth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee



3.

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2.

DIANE'S CORNER

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



DIANE QUARLESS
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

25/11



International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

“Development is not possible if women lack physical autonomy and are unable to decide freely on matters relevant to their lives. More needs to be done to address the situation of women living in rural and remote areas, for those displaced due to natural and other disasters, and for those migrating, whom often fall between the cracks.”

#DirectorsTake

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



SAINT LUCIA FOOD AND RUM FESTIVAL

It's the must-visit food Caribbean festival of 2018: the Saint Lucia Food and Rum Festival, which takes place in January with a new schedule and an appearance by one of the world's top chefs, Marcus Samuelsson.

The festival, which is taking place from 12-14 January, also includes another major addition: the first-ever Caribbean Rum Awards, curated by the rum experts at Caribbean Journal.

The Caribbean Rum Awards, selected by a special jury of rum experts from around the Caribbean and the world, will celebrate the best of the rum world, from premium aged expressions to the rhum agricole of the French Caribbean.

The festival features select restaurants with rum-inspired Prix Fixe menus, with Samuelsson presenting a Saint Lucian twist on the menu he famously prepared for former US President, Barack Obama's, first State Dinner.

The Saturday 13 January schedule will see the Rodney Bay strip converted into the Rodney Bay Culinary Experience, with some of the island's best restaurants setting up sampling booths and allowing people to enjoy the tastes of their rum-inspired creations.

The festival reaches its climax the next day, with an open-air event at the Pigeon Island National Landmark, with restaurateurs, chefs and rum makers presenting the height of St Lucian cuisine, with a focus on rum infusions. ■



CELEBRATE 2018: WORLD-FAMOUS FESTIVALS IN PUERTO RICO

For decades, Puerto Rico has been a popular destination for tourists because of its perpetual party atmosphere. The sun is always shining, the water is always welcoming, and the people know how to live life to the fullest. Puerto Rico's resorts and vacation spots are bigger and better than ever. Naturally, this also means that every celebration in Puerto Rico is sure to surpass all expectation.

Here are some festivals to look forward to in 2018:

San Sebastián Festival

One of the biggest Puerto Rican festivals in San Juan is the Fiestas de la Calle San Sebastián or the San Sebastián Festival. The main event takes place on San Sebastián Street in Old San Juan every year on the third weekend of January. Come and experience this magical event on any or all of the four days it is taking place this year from 18-21 January.

The festival celebrates Saint Sebastian, a Christian who died a martyr for his religion. While it is still rooted in the rich heritage and history of Puerto Rico, it has evolved into a much larger spectacle. Like a Puerto Rican Mardi Gras, hundreds of thousands of people gather for a multitude of live concerts, a huge parade, dance performances, food, drink, and artisans showcasing their crafts.

Carnaval de Ponce

We've all heard of Brazilian Carnival; well, meet it's lesser-known cousin. The Carnaval de Ponce (or officially Carnaval Ponceño) originated over 200 years ago and takes over the entire historic downtown area of Ponce. This spirited event takes place every year for an entire week, concluding the day before Ash Wednesday.

The festival features live music, food and drink galore, a parade for the King and Queen of the Carnival, and the Burial of the Sardine to symbolize the ridding of sins and welcoming the season of Lent.

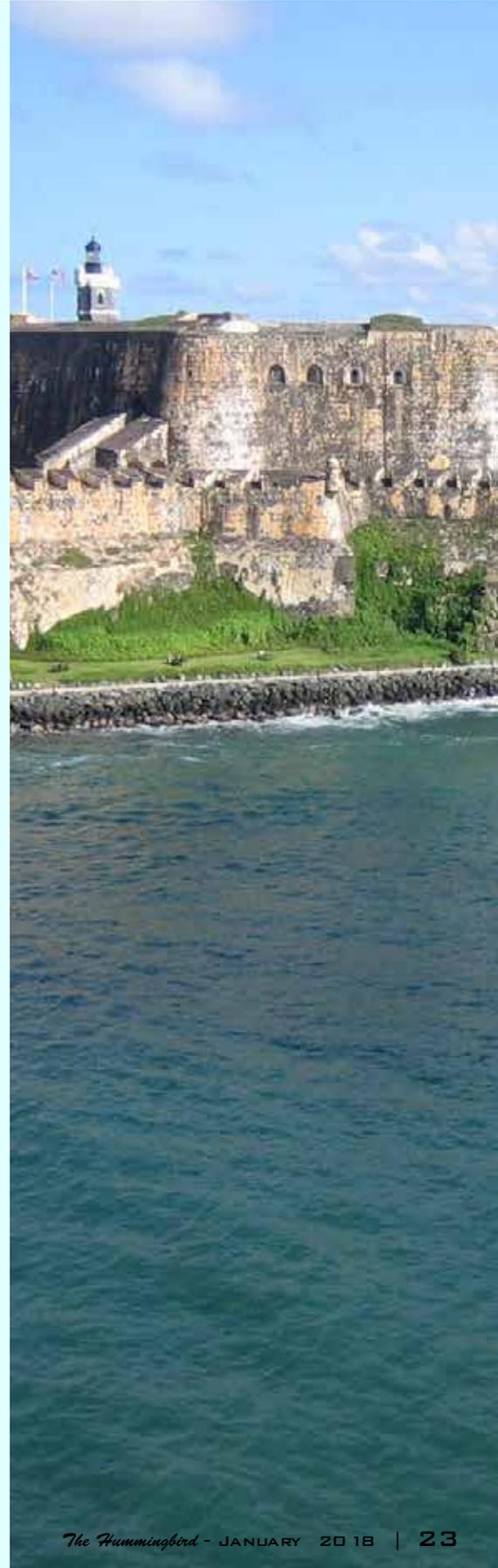
This year's event will be taking place from 7-13 February, with an expected more than 100,000 guests, based on previous gatherings. The Carnaval de Ponce is similar to Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Rio de Janeiro's Carnival, and the Carnival of Venice.

Heineken Jazz Festival

Another fine occasion to enjoy some unbridled revelry, the Heineken Jazz festival, while on the newer side, has already gained regional and international attention.

The Festival, which will take place in March this year, showcases up-and-coming Jazz talents and emphasizes Puerto Rican music styles and Latin Jazz.

While exposure is a great incentive, the ultimate prize of the Festival is a Jazz Scholarship. ■



ARTIE DUBRIE WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

The newest addition to the ECLAC Caribbean family, Sustainable Development Officer, Artie Dubrie, a national of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), was one of three Caribbean citizens who were recently awarded by the Ozone Secretariat for their leadership work on policy and implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MP) on Substances that deplete the ozone layer. The two other awardees were Dr. Marissa Gowrie, Deputy Environmental Manager/ National Ozone Officer, at the Ministry of Planning and Development, T&T and Mr. Leslie Smith, the National Ozone Officer, Energy Division Ministry of Finance, Grenada.

The MP is a protocol to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. It is an international treaty designed for phasing out the consumption of harmful ozone layer depleting substances. All Caribbean countries are parties to and in compliance with this multilateral environmental agreement.

The 2017 award ceremony was part of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the MP, during the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties to Protocol, which was held at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) headquarters in Montreal, Canada during November 2017. In recognition, each awardee received a trophy sculptured in the form of the Chinese Goddess "Nuwa". Nuwa is a goddess who smelted a seven-colour stone to block a hole in the sky. Using this well-known symbol in Chinese mythology, best known for repairing the wall of heaven, Nuwa will take up a new quest, the modern day challenges of reversing the scale of ozone layer depletion. The artist, Professor Yuan Xikun, who is also the first patron of the arts of the United Nation's Environmental Programme (UNEP), hopes the image of Nüwa warns of the urgency of global environmental protection and appeals to the international community to protect the ozone layer and climate protection.

The Ozone Secretariat, which bestowed the honours, recognised extraordinary contributions from governments, party delegates, groups or individuals who worked in the development and implementation of the MP.

Although Dubrie recently joined ECLAC Caribbean, her UN career began in 2003 with the UN Environment, where she held responsibilities for supporting developing countries and in particular, the small islands developing states (SIDS), in meeting and sustaining compliance with the multilateral environmental agreement of the MP on substances that deplete the ozone layer. This support was provided in synergy with national sustainable development priorities. Artie's first posting was in the Latin America and Caribbean regional office from 2003, followed a posting in 2012 to the UN Environment Asia and the Pacific office. The Caribbean awardees were also recently honoured during a recognition ceremony hosted by the United Nations Development Programme in T&T. ■





Balsamic Chicken

What you will need:

A rub seasoned with paprika, rosemary, and garlic gives this low calorie chicken recipe lively flavor while a balsamic-vinegar drizzle adds subtle sweetness.

4 (4 ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ teaspoon snipped fresh rosemary
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
Nonstick cooking spray
¼ cup dry red wine or water
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Fresh rosemary sprigs (optional)

What you need to do:

1. If desired, place each chicken breast half between two pieces of plastic wrap and pound with the flat side of a meat mallet to a rectangle ¼ to ½ inch thick.
2. In a small bowl, combine paprika, oil, rosemary, garlic, and pepper; mix well until it becomes a paste.
3. Rub both sides of each chicken breast half with paste mixture.
4. Line 13x9x2-inch baking pan with foil or coat with nonstick cooking spray.
5. Place coated chicken in prepared pan; cover and refrigerate for 2 to 6 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 450°F.
7. Drizzle chicken with wine.
8. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until an instant-read meat thermometer inserted in the thickest portion of the chicken registers 170°F and the juices run clear, turning once halfway through baking. (If chicken has been pounded, bake about 6 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear, turning once halfway through baking.)
9. Remove from oven.
10. Immediately drizzle vinegar onto chicken in the baking pan.
11. Transfer chicken to serving plates.
12. Stir the liquid in the baking pan and drizzle over chicken.
13. If desired, garnish with fresh rosemary.

Serves 4



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