



COVID-19: ECONOMIC RECOVERY

DISCUSSIONS ON SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) AT
VIRTUAL MEETING

DISASTER TRAINING

ECLAC STAFF PARTICIPATES IN
TRAINING AT CHILEAN GOVERNMENT
AGENCY ONEMI

E-GOVERNMENT

CREATING AN ENABLING
ENVIRONMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

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About us

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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International Days

9 August

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

12 August

International Youth Day

19 August

World Humanitarian Day

23 August

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition

Upcoming Meetings

4 - 7 August

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 101st session - Geneva

17 August - 4 September

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Twenty-third session - Geneva

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 **ECLAC Caribbean**
Posted Aug 13

The collapse of tourism (projected in -50% for 2020) will drag down service exports, especially from the #Caribbean, according to #ECLAC's latest Special report. More here: <https://bit.ly/2PwTDVg>



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Alicia Barcena Executive Secretary of ECLAC

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RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE IS NECESSARY

HURRICANE SEASON

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 **ECLAC Caribbean**
Posted Aug 5

#ECLAC launch its #COVID19 special report N° 6, which analyzes the effects of the pandemic on international #trade and #logistics. Details: <https://bit.ly/30s2OMG>



THE EFFECTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND LOGISTICS

6 AUGUST 2020
11:00 AM
(CHILE GMT -04:00)

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ECLAC staff participates in ONEMI disaster training

The National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry (Spanish: Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior), widely known as ONEMI, recently benefitted from a training session on ECLAC's "Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) Methodology for Disaster Assessment". ONEMI is a Chilean government agency dedicated to the prevention, organization, coordination and information relative to natural disasters.

Attending the training during 15 to 19 June 2020 from ECLAC Caribbean was Public Information Assistant, Blaine Marcano, who shared his experience of disaster assessment.

ECLAC's methodology for the evaluation of disasters follows

a multisectoral approach for estimating the effects and impacts of a disaster. The global description of the impact and the quantification and valuation of the damages, losses and additional costs caused by disasters make it possible to determine the resources required to restore the functionality of economic and social activities and make the necessary investments for the resilience of physical, economic and social infrastructures in the face of the threat of new events.

To formulate and estimate the financial requirements of the recovery and reconstruction strategy, it is essential to have quantitative information about the effects and impacts of the disaster. In addition, the methodology incorporates two cross-cutting

elements in the evaluation: environment and gender considerations.

ECLAC's methodology considers three sectors: social, infrastructure and productive. In turn, these are analyzed through specific subsectors. Each presentation is followed by exercises that are designed to consolidate concepts such as damages, losses, additional costs, reconstruction, baselines, among others.

Over the five days of the training, ONEMI representatives were given information in the following areas: affected population, education, housing, health, electricity, and water and sanitation.

Each area was conveyed to the training participants through

standardized concepts, which allow for sectoral analyses that inform a comprehensive estimate of the effect and impact on society.

For example, in the area of population, the correct evaluation of the affected population is essential for the general analysis of the event and for the estimation of damages and losses in various sectors. The analysis also provides an independent benchmark to assess the consistency of all estimates.

Given its linkage with all other productive, social and infrastructure sectors, the electricity sector is also key. Its impact can translate into an impact on the rest of the economy. For the same reason, power replenishment is an important element of the recovery and rebuilding process. This sector includes the generation of electrical energy in bulk, its transmission from the generation facilities to the distribution centers, and its distribution to end users.

Marcano explained that following the presentations on each sector, exercises were conducted as part of the training, to enhance the benefit to participant's knowledge of disaster assessment. ■



Cuba to manufacture lung ventilators

The Cuban Neuroscience Center (CNEURO) recently announced that it will have the first nationally produced lung ventilators for patients affected by COVID-19.

The devices will be built to also measure oxygen levels with a high support range without electricity that works on batteries.

"The national health system will receive 250 invasive and 250 non-invasive ventilators next October," the CNEURO director Mitchell Valdes Sosa stated. "This will strengthen the country's response capacity to COVID-19 and any type of disease."

The Lung fans are being built with funds provided by the European Union (EU) the NGO MediCuba-Switzerland, and different campaigns undertaken by epidemiology and bio-engineering societies.

"To check their operation under close-to-real-life conditions, the devices will be tested on pigs over 50 kilograms. If tests are satisfactory, ventilators would receive certification from Cuban authorities," Sosa said. ■



*The
Hummingbird*



COVID-19: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

for small island developing states (SIDS)
discussed at virtual meeting



For many small island developing states (SIDS), the economic impact of COVID-19 has been extremely painful, given the disruption on tourism and even the supply chain for some, adding to a decline in commodity prices for others, and constraints in health infrastructure on a broad scale.

This was one of several key takeaways from a recent virtual meeting of representatives from ECLAC Caribbean, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the State of Hawai'i in the United States (US) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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COVID-19: Economic recovery and resilience for small island developing states (SIDS) discussed at virtual meeting

Discussions centred on how the COVID-19 pandemic was depressing economic growth, job creation, increasing citizen insecurity, and challenging islanders' capacity to provide health and education services particularly for the most vulnerable. For many, it is a major additional disruption to already stressed economies facing climate change and natural disasters, and increasing public debt.

Now, as the hurricane season is upon us, SIDS face additional challenges and must take action to mitigate against further social and economic disruption, in the

context of limited fiscal space.

Attending for ECLAC Caribbean was Deputy Director, Dr. Dillon Alleyne, who reported that participants took note of the immediate challenges in deciding how far or how soon "locked down" islands could be reopened to visitors, given that there is no vaccine at the moment. They also discussed how to manage the economic impact of travel restrictions projected to be in place for the foreseeable future.

Islands are balancing efforts to contain the virus and prepare their community health facilities

for new potential cases, even as they work to open their economies and grapple with the immediate impacts on falling tourism revenue, loss of jobs, and negative growth.

The representatives agreed that best practices for reopening include establishing clear priorities and goals for each stage of the recovery. These include engaging stakeholders, ensuring transparency, increasing monitoring and testing, basing decision making on facts, using national and global best practices, considering a wide range of funding sources and focusing



“

Climate change poses both an existential challenge and an opportunity to invest in local renewable energy and resilience infrastructure, and in nature-based solutions.

”

on a need for speed. However, since tourism is mostly externally driven for many, their success depends also on rapid recovery elsewhere.

With their geographic and cultural contexts, islands must tread carefully as they negotiate an uncertain post-COVID-19 economic future. A consistent message is that, despite the threats, the affected islands see the crisis as an opportunity to steer future development in a direction that sustains and strengthens island communities. For islands, the discussion is not only about the economy, it's about building resilience in the context of sustainable development.

For islands heavily dependent on tourism or international trade for local income, COVID-19 created a particular challenge. Hawai'i has the lowest infection rate and the highest unemployment rate in the United States, while Caribbean states are suffering from the loss of crucial foreign exchange due to the closure of the tourism sectors, the decline in commodity prices and a high debt burden characterized by significant debt servicing costs.

Speakers highlighted the necessity and opportunity to diversify economies over time, and to manage their tourism in a way that better benefits islanders. Speakers also highlighted such key opportunities as, the role of digitalization, the need to invest in the blue economy, and to transition to a low-emission and resilient infrastructure.

Digital access has been a lifeline during the pandemic. COVID-19 has accelerated the movement to digital and distance-based work, learning, and services, creating challenges and opportunities for islands. There is a clear need to address inequities in access to the digital economy. However, digitizing also opens the promise of transformational new frontiers for islanders in providing and accessing a range of goods and services from remote providers.

It was agreed during the virtual meeting that Islands can seize this opportunity by investing in broadband infrastructure, training and retooling for the digital economy and strengthening cybersecurity.

Small island states are also large ocean economies and enhancing strategies to promote sustainable use of ocean resources is a major opportunity.

Climate change poses both an existential challenge and an opportunity to invest in local renewable energy and resilience infrastructure, and in nature-based solutions.

To support small island developing states, it is critical to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2014 UN Samoa Pathway, which recognizes that SIDS are particularly vulnerable to external shocks due to their size and geography, and highlights the importance of commitments to support island sustainability and partnerships. In this regard the private sector should be incentivized to come on board as partners with the public sector, to address the SDGs especially where governments are highly indebted. ■

HURRICANE SEASON

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES - RESILIENT ECONOMIES

Storm Season in the Caribbean

Weather forecasters have concluded that the number of tropical storms this year is likely to break the average record in the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea; hence, the season is expected to be more active than usual.

The cyclone or hurricane season in the Northern Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico zone officially began on 01 June and lasts until 30 November. A few days after the season began, three tropical storms were reported: Arthur, Bertha and Cristobal, which is a record number for a season in its early days, according to Dr. Miriam Teresita Llanes, head of the Weather Forecast Center of Cuba's Meteorology Institute (INSMET).

Tropical storm Arthur developed on 16 May, east of Florida Peninsula, while Bertha formed on 27 May near South Carolina, and Cristobal on 02 June, in the warm waters of the Campeche

Bay, in the Gulf of Mexico. An average of 12 tropical cyclones, that is, tropical storms plus hurricanes- normally develop in the Atlantic Basin (the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico) during the hurricane season; subtropical events are not included in that number. As many as 15 tropical storms have been predicted for the Northern Atlantic Basin, eight of which could be rated as hurricanes, Llanes outlined. Of them, 10 are expected to form over the Atlantic Ocean, two over the Caribbean and three over the Gulf of Mexico, she added.

There is an 80% likelihood of at least one hurricane developing and getting stronger in the Caribbean and of another forming over the Atlantic area moving toward the Caribbean region. Meanwhile, there is a 60% chance of Cuba being hit by one hurricane at least, the expert said.

Cuba is one of the few countries in Latin America that develops its own weather forecasts of the cyclone season, based on statistics and numerical models. However, it is impossible to determine with accuracy where or when one of the expected meteorological events will develop.

The island has 14 Provincial Weather Forecast Centers, 68 conventional stations and eight meteorological radars that allow for early detection of weather events so as to be better prepared for any phenomenon of this kind.

National institutions such as the Forecast Center, the Maritime Surveillance Center and the Atmospheric Physics Research Center also contribute to this effort. ■



SIDS national focal points focus on COVID-19 response

As the COVID-19 response continues to constrain the fiscal space of SIDS and exacerbate their vulnerabilities to natural disasters brought about by climate change, international support is critical. This also requires a concerted effort to promote coherence and coordination at the national, regional and global levels of the COVID-19 response, in line with the objectives of the SIDS national focal point network.

Against this backdrop, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) convened a virtual regional meeting on 29 July 2020.

Due to sharp falls in tourism revenues and remittances flows, SIDS are likely to experience a pronounced contraction in 2020, further exacerbating their

vulnerability to economic and climatic shocks.

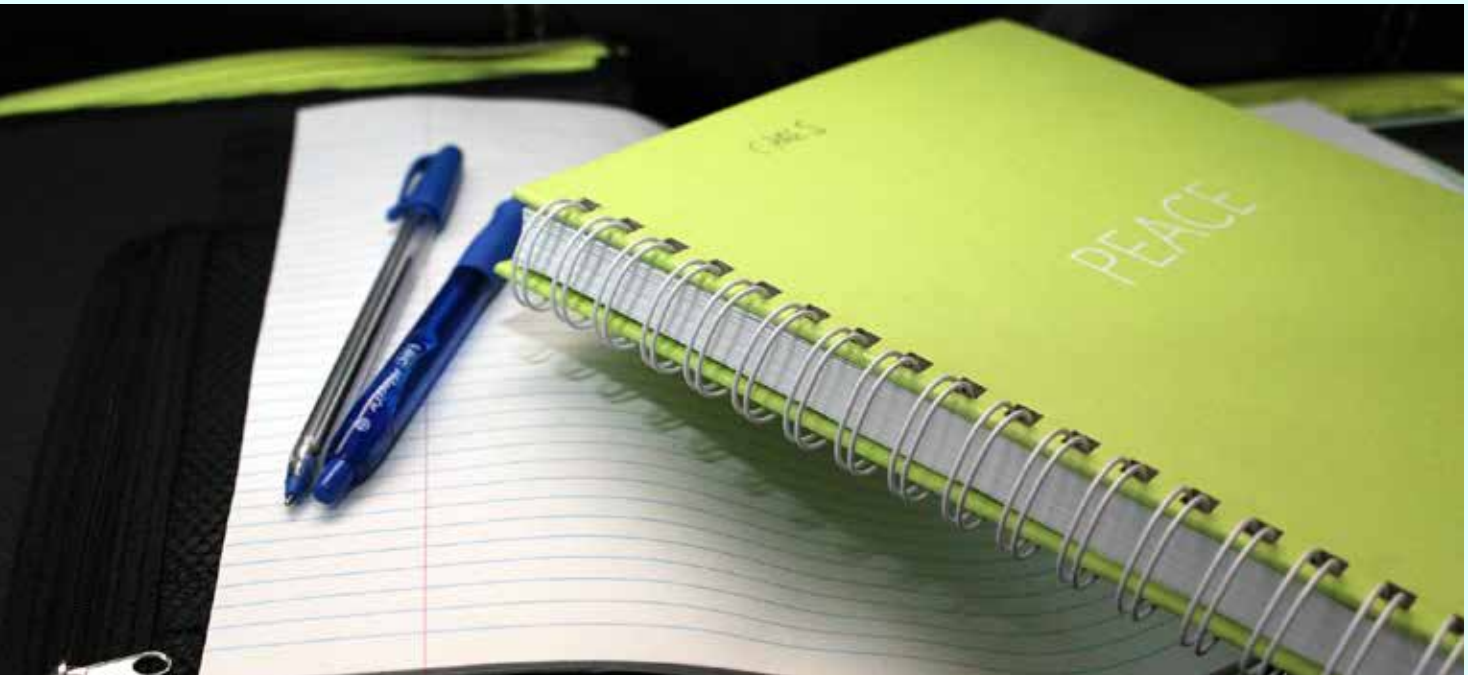
Disproportionately high debt-servicing burdens of many SIDS will weaken their external balance, potentially increasing the likelihood of debt defaults. As food importers, SIDS also face an immense challenge to ensuring food security and nutrition, a juggling feat that requires balancing precarious supply chains in many fronts including health supplies as SIDS respond to COVID-19.

The meeting provided an opportunity for national focal points to share experiences and best practices on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the national, regional and global levels. The focal points also shared experiences and best practices on mainstreaming the SAMOA Pathway and SDGs into national development processes as well their implementation and follow up, in the context

of COVID-19, in line with the principle to “build back better”.

Speaking at the virtual meeting was ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, who acknowledged that the pandemic has resulted in increased challenges for many Caribbean SIDS, due to the already high indebtedness of the subregion.

Solutions to this dilemma were suggested, including SIDS regional resilience funds, and new multi-variable criteria for SIDS beyond income status, that take account of their unique vulnerabilities, in considering eligibility for concessional finance. Speakers also highlighted the need for urgent liquidity support, through international financing institutions, to hopefully soften some of the blows faced SIDS due to the Covid-19 pandemic. ■



Saint Lucia to retire common entrance

Several countries in the Caribbean, including Saint Lucia, have decided to retire the Common Entrance Examination, and implement the enhanced Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA).

The CPEA, introduced by CXC in 2012, will improve the quality of education in primary schools and enable increased literacies necessary for students to benefit fully from secondary school education.

Patterson Abraham, education officer for testing and evaluation at the Ministry of Education, elaborated on the measures being taken in the preparatory process.

“We are presently undergoing a two-week training program with our primary school teachers from grades 4 to 6. In the first week, we host sessions with teachers from the northern district, and in the second week, we meet with teachers from districts five to eight,” Abraham said.

The CPEA will be implemented in September beginning with Grade 5 students and will consist of both an internal and external component.

The internal component will include peer assessments, teacher-made tests, practice skills, book reports, and projects.

Under the CPEA, students will also be continuously assessed for the duration of the project component. The internal component of the CPEA contributes to 40% of the overall grade.

The external component, a test given by Caribbean Examination Council, will contribute 60% of the overall grade at the end of the program. ■



Haiti is home to new fish species

Like many Caribbean children, James Josaphat grew up with a love for fishing, spending much of his free time near water with his friends in Haiti. He didn't know at the time that he would be involved in the discovery of a new species of fish many years later, right in his homeland.

"Since my childhood, I have been passionate about fish," James recalled.

Against the backdrop of Haiti's incredible, much-undiscovered biodiversity and widespread social unrest, James began his journey into the world of fish at the undergraduate level with courses in fisheries, coastal resources and aquacultures.

"I obtained a scholarship for a master's degree in a programme (MSc in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the Caribbean), funded by the European Union, ECCAM (Education for Climate Change and Adaptation and Migration) to go to Trinidad at The University of the West Indies." Originally, James' plan had been to conduct his research in Haiti, but the logistics of moving back and forth didn't work, and decided instead to design a project based in Trinidad that would give him the skills in freshwater fish and sampling to take back to Haiti.

With the economic and social challenges Haiti has faced, conservation efforts have been difficult to put in place. Lake Miragoâne, in the south-west of Haiti, is where the incredible discovery was made - a fish called *Limia mandibularis*, a cousin of the Trinidadian guppy.

"It was very exciting for me because I am very young in the field and I was able to be a part of a team that discovered a new species in my country," James said.

The fish, whose discovery was recently published in the journal *Zootaxa*, is an endemic species - which means it is only found in Haiti. Its name, "jawed limia", comes from its well-developed lower jaw (mandible).

According to Prof Ingo Schlupp, a poeciliid expert from the University of Oklahoma, "This is the most unusual mouth I have ever seen in a livebearing [retains the eggs inside the body and gives birth to live offspring] fish."

In other words, this fish is sporting a wicked underbite. ■



Creating an enabling environment for e-government in the Caribbean

Several recommendations were made towards having a sustainable system of e-government in the Caribbean, at a virtual expert group meeting (EGM) held on 15 July 2020.

The meeting was organized to discuss ECLAC Caribbean's upcoming study, entitled "Creating an enabling environment for e-government in the Caribbean: a review of data protection legislation for alignment with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)".

This study was undertaken as countries across the Caribbean prepare to adopt or strengthen their data protection legislation in order to guarantee individual privacy rights and safeguard personal data, while creating an enabling environment for data sharing and e-government in the subregion.

The recommendations mentioned above include firstly an urgent need for Caribbean countries to put in place modern data protection legislation that protects privacy rights and personal data, while creating an enabling environment for digital government and data sharing in the subregion.

Secondly, the meeting noted that technological developments have

caused exposure of personal data to unprecedented threats, which necessitates the development of enhanced frameworks for the protection of privacy. As a result of its extraterritorial scope and influence beyond European borders, the European Union's GDPR is expected to have a global impact and contribute to the harmonization of data protection legislation around the world. National data protection laws need not mirror each article of the GDPR but should aim to establish a comparable or essentially equivalent level of protection and the means for ensuring the effective application of each legislative provision.

Another recommendation coming from the EGM was for the implementation of internationally aligned data protection legislation across the Caribbean. This will not only strengthen individual privacy rights but also help to facilitate data and trade flows between countries both within and beyond the Caribbean.

Addressing the participants, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, stated that providing a level of data protection for personal data essentially equivalent to that provided for in the GDPR can ensure a continuous flow of information to and

from the Caribbean with significant economic value for countries in the subregion.

"Global e-commerce offers new opportunities for Caribbean organisations to operate in international markets. Since organisations processing the personal data of EU citizens outside the EU are also liable for fines under the GDPR, aligning national regimes with the GDPR will also reduce the risk of financial penalties for Caribbean organisations", she asserted.

The components of a robust framework for processing personal data and enforcing privacy guarantees were further discussed by meeting participants. It was agreed that a competent supervisory authority is an essential feature of a modern data protection framework, but it must be adequately resourced and empowered to fulfill its functions independently. Guidance was also given on the material scope of modern data protection legislation, how legislation can balance privacy rights with freedom of expression and press freedoms, and the age whereby children can give their consent to processing of their personal data under the GDPR.

Participants also agreed on the need



for Caribbean supervisory authorities to cooperate and engage in dialogue on matters of data protection to contribute to the adoption of harmonized privacy protections in the subregion. Further regional projects in areas related to data protection and cybersecurity as well as global cooperation forums for data protection were discussed.

The EGM was attended by representatives of government ministries, departments and supervisory authorities responsible for data protection, information sharing and e-government from six Caribbean countries participating in the study, namely Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cayman Islands and Jamaica.

Representatives of regional and international organizations with data protection, cybersecurity and e-government mandates also participated in the meeting, including CARICOM's Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS), the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), the European Commission, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the World Bank. Other participants included legal advisers and consultants from other Caribbean countries and a representative from the German Federal Commission for Data Protection and Freedom of Information. ■



Renewable energy offers huge jobs potential for Cayman Island post-COVID-19

A genuine commitment to renewable energy could help drive a green jobs revolution as Cayman seeks to kickstart the economy in the aftermath of the coronavirus crisis, industry leaders believe.

The country's National Energy Plan already sets a target that 70% of its power supply should come from renewables by 2037.

But clean-power advocates hope the economic crisis will inject new urgency into making that target a reality.

Until now, much of the debate about renewable energy has focused on balancing the desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the need to keep utility bills down and ensure the lights stay on when the sun doesn't shine.

But with thousands of people out of work and whole sectors of the tourism economy in long-term peril, the focus is shifting to another less heralded aspect of the switch to renewables – employment.

Green energy is the fastest growing industry in North America and the fastest growing jobs category in the world. It also has the advantage of offering well-paid career opportunities to people of all academic backgrounds, says James Whittaker, president of the Cayman Renewable Energy Association.

"You can come out of high school into this industry and make really good money, or if you have a masters degree, you can make twice as much on the engineering side," he stated. "There is a broad range of job types and that is what Cayman needs." ■

Whole Roast Fish with Lemon and Herbs

What you will need:

Fish:

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

Salsa Verde:

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

How to Make it:

Step 1: Make the Fish

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

Step 2: Make the Salsa Verde

1. In a medium bowl, mix all of the ingredients.
2. Serve the fish with the salsa verde.



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