

ABOUT ECLAC and the CDCC

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established in 1948 to support Latin American governments in the economic and social development of that region. Subsequently, in 1966, the Commission (ECLA, at that time) established the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain to serve all countries of the insular Caribbean, as well as Belize, Guyana and Suriname, making it the largest United Nations body in the subregion.

At its sixteenth session in 1975, the Commission agreed to create the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body, which would function within the ECLA structure to promote development cooperation among Caribbean countries. Secretariat services to the CDCC would be provided by the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. Nine years later, the Commission's widened role was officially acknowledged when the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) modified its title to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Key Areas of Activity

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat) functions as a subregional think-tank and facilitates increased contact and cooperation among its membership. Complementing the ECLAC/CDCC work programme framework, are the broader directives issued by the United Nations General Assembly when in session, which constitute the Organisation's mandate. At present, the overarching articulation of this mandate is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Towards meeting these objectives, the Secretariat conducts research; provides technical advice to governments upon request; organizes intergovernmental and expert group meetings; helps to formulate and articulate a regional perspective within global forums; and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels.

Areas of specialization include trade, statistics, social development, science and technology, and sustainable development, while actual operational activities extend to economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, assessment of the socio-economic impacts of natural disasters, climate change, data collection and analysis, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean also functions as the Secretariat for coordinating the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The scope of ECLAC/CDCC activities is documented in the wide range of publications produced by the subregional headquarters in Port of Spain.

MEMBER COUNTRIES

Antigua and Barbuda	Haiti
The Bahamas	Jamaica
Barbados	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Belize	Saint Lucia
Cuba	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Dominica	Suriname
Dominican Republic	Trinidad and Tobago
Grenada	
Guyana	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Anguilla
Aruba
Bermuda
British Virgin Islands
Cayman Islands
Curaçao
Guadeloupe
Martinique
Montserrat
Puerto Rico
Sint Maarten
Turks and Caicos Islands
United States Virgin Islands

CONTENTS

Director's Desk:

Artificial intelligence for Caribbean sustainable development 3

Toward AI Policies for the Caribbean 4

AI Governance for the Caribbean 6

"It's messy, but we have to do it now" – Craig Ramlal, UN advisor, on AI regulation 8

Regular Features

Recent and upcoming meetings 15

List of Recent ECLAC Documents and Publications 15

A Note on this issue of the FOCUS

The illustrations used in this issue of the Focus were generated using Artificial Intelligence.

COVER

SOURCE: Adobe Stock

PROMPT: Hands of a African Caribbean child holding crystal glowing globe, planet Earth at a sunny green meadow background, copyspace, taking care Ecology, sustainable nature, conversation concept

PAGE 4

SOURCE: Adobe Firefly

PROMPT: Woman working in a futuristic office sci fi style

PAGE 6

SOURCE: Adobe Stock

PROMPT: Globe in robot hand with icon on nature background,

FOCUS: ECLAC in the Caribbean is a publication of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean/Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC).

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Director	Diane Quarless
Editor	Jabari Fraser
Copy Editor	Denise Balgobin
Coordinator	Dale Alexander
Proof Reader	Veera Deokiesingh-Fraser
Design and Layout	Liseanne Martin-Subero

CONNECT WITH US FOR MORE:



Produced by ECLAC

CONTACT INFORMATION

ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

PO Box 1113, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Tel: (868) 224-8000

E-mail: spou-pos@eclac.org

Website: www.eclac.org/portofspain



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR CARIBBEAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2023 saw Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools becoming widely available to the general public, leading to the generation of new works of art, songs, text, and computer code. This explosion in new outputs has led to much excitement around AI's potential, but also brought to the forefront concerns about countries and communities being left behind, and the technology's potential to harm individuals and societies. This issue of FOCUS magazine discusses the potential impact of AI on the Caribbean, and avenues to develop tailored AI policies, governance systems, and to engage with AI issues at the international level.

AI holds immense potential for the Caribbean, but its deployment and use must be managed responsibly, based on established values and goals, while ensuring the protection of human rights. Discussions on the ethics of AI have been ongoing at the international level, and in 2019 led to the adoption of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence. Work to implement the Recommendation is now underway, including in the Caribbean. In the first article of this issue, colleagues from UNESCO discuss best practices related to AI policy, present the Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap, and invite you to provide comments on the draft document.

AI systems could support the achievement of many of the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its Sustainable Development Goals, but could also inhibit the achievement of

others. Regulatory oversight is essential to ensure that AI can support sustainable development and contribute to greater equity and inclusion. In the second article, two lawyers provide an overview of action to govern AI in the Caribbean, discuss Caribbean AI governance challenges, and share some potential pathways forward for the subregion.

As noted in the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, there has been a lack of "representativeness and inclusiveness in global discussions", and of overall coordination on AI. To counteract this trend, a 32-member High-level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence was formed in October 2023 by the United Nations Secretary-General. The Body will help bridge existing and emerging initiatives on AI governance, and provide recommendations by summer 2024. The final article of this issue consists of an interview with Dr. Craig Ramlal, a national

of Trinidad and Tobago and lecturer at the University of the West Indies. The interview addresses the most exciting opportunities for AI use in the Caribbean, the potential impact, and critical policy actions that need to be taken.

Artificial intelligence is already having an impact on the Caribbean region, and Caribbean countries are eager to participate in discussions about it, learn about the technology's potential, and find ways to regulate it for the greater good. This issue of FOCUS will provide some insight into both current efforts and future prospects.

Yours in focus,

Diane Quarless