

# the Humming Bird



## NEW WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION

AND PROSPECTS 2025 REPORT  
BY UN DESA

## CELEBRATING A DECADE OF PROGRESS:

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN  
AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

## WORLD WETLANDS DAY

WETLANDS FOR OUR COMMON  
FUTURE



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

# inside THIS ISSUE

**4** New World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025 report by UN DESA projects Caribbean GDP growth steady at 2.5%, unchanged from 2024, as challenges persist.

**6** **A HUMMINGBIRD FEATURE:** International Day of Women and Girls in Science : Celebrating a Decade of Progress

**10** World Wetlands Day February 2 : Wetlands for our common future

**14** UN weather experts from the WMO confirmed on Friday that 2024 was the hottest year on record, at 1.55 degrees Celsius (C) above pre-industrial temperatures.

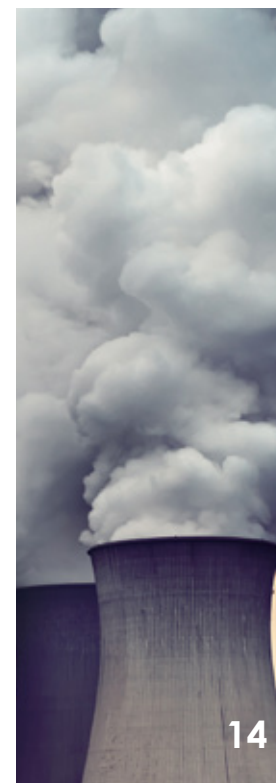
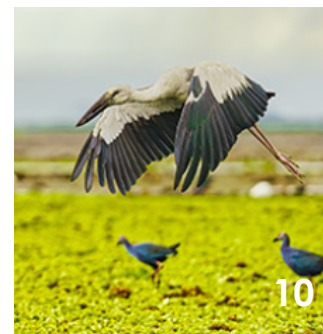
## ABOUT US

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.

### EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor: Jabari Fraser  
Publication Design: Liseanne Martin-Subero

Please see our contact details on the back cover of this magazine.



## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

**3 March**  
World Wildlife Day

**8 March**  
International Women's Day

**25 March**  
International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

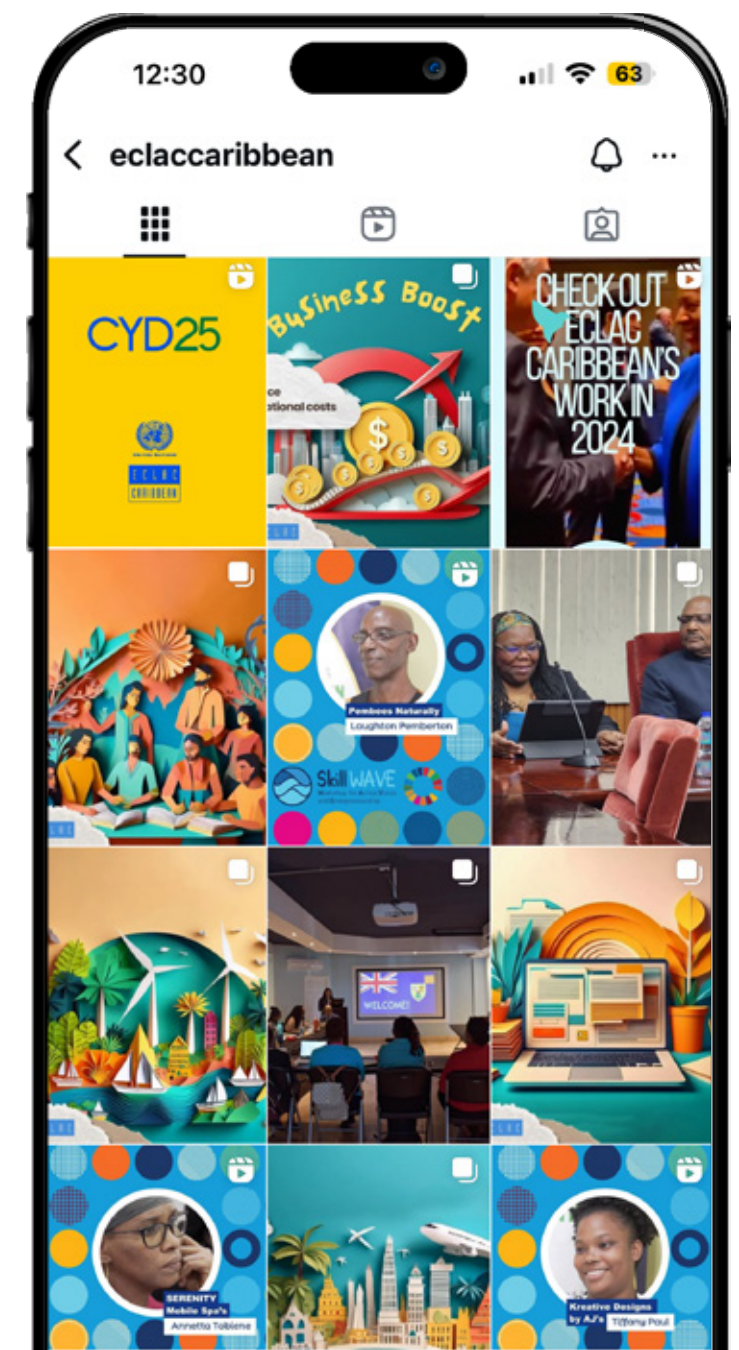
## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**26 - 27 MARCH 2025**  
Caribbean Youth Dialogues 2025 in preparation of the ECOSOC Youth Forum

**6 MARCH 2025**  
Launch of the Gender Equality Bulletin - No. 4: Time for Care in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards Social and Gender Co-responsibility

**4 MARCH 2025**  
Stakeholder Consultation on the Roadmap for the Implementation of the Escazú Agreement in Grenada

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# NEW WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION AND PROSPECTS 2025 REPORT BY UN DESA

PROJECTS CARIBBEAN GDP GROWTH STEADY AT 2.5%, UNCHANGED FROM 2024, AS CHALLENGES PERSIST.

New York, 9 January 2025 – The United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025 report, released today, projects that economic growth in the Caribbean (excluding Guyana) will remain unchanged at 2.5% in 2025, matching the estimated growth for 2024. This forecast comes as part of a broader analysis of global economic trends conducted by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) in collaboration with other UN agencies.

While this growth rate significantly outpaces the 0.5% average recorded between 2010 and 2019, the report cautions that it may not be sufficient to address the region's pressing development challenges and improve living conditions.

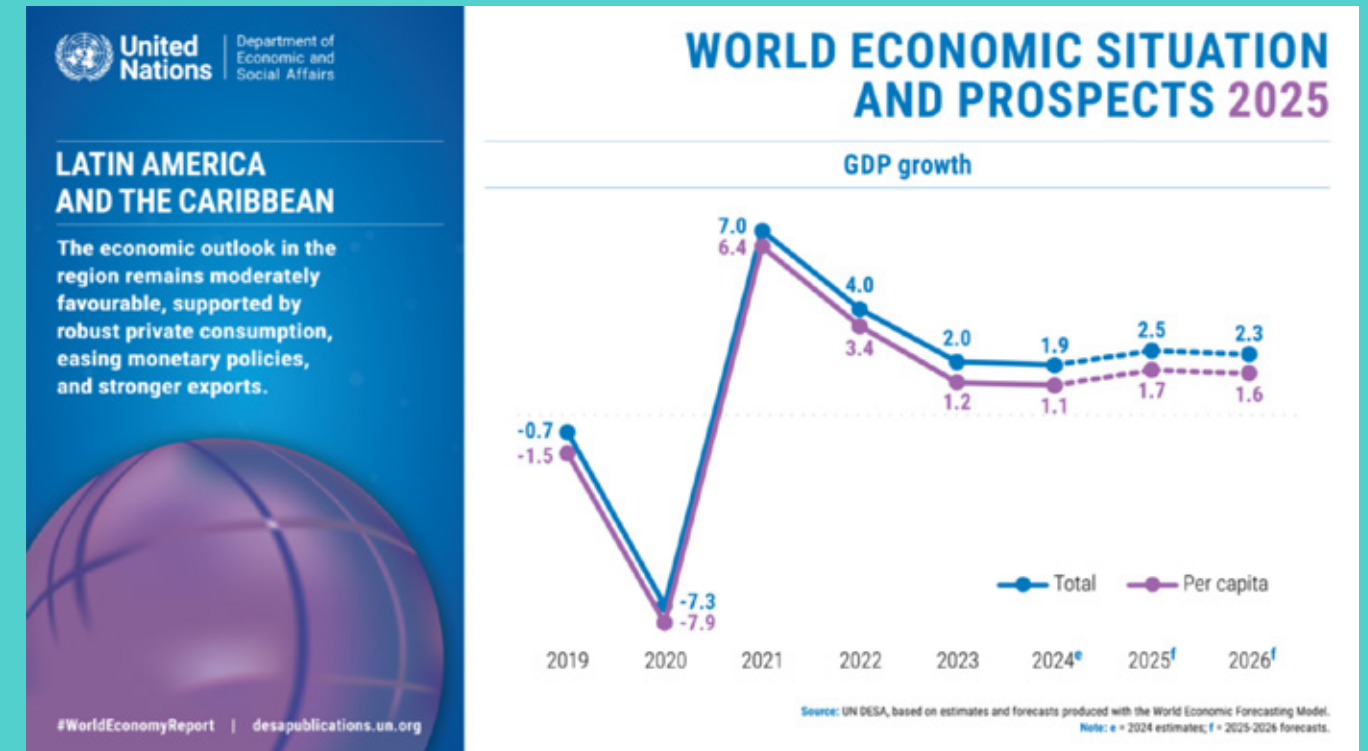
Looking at the broader Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, the report forecasts GDP growth to rise from an estimated 1.9% in 2024 to 2.5% in 2025, supported by improvements in private consumption, easing monetary policies, and stronger export growth. However, this growth level remains below the 1.7% average observed between 2010 and 2019, underscoring the continued economic vulnerabilities and constraints facing many countries in the region. The UN report identifies high debt levels and vulnerability to climate shocks as key factors constraining progress

towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Caribbean. Public debt in the region stood at an average of 67.9% of GDP, signaling a return to pre-pandemic levels. The report warns that this high debt burden, coupled with increasing interest payments as a share of fiscal revenues, is limiting the financial resources available for critical investments in education, health, infrastructure, and sustainable development.

Despite these challenges, the report notes some bright spots in the region. Guyana, which is excluded from the overall Caribbean growth figure, is projected to maintain GDP growth above 3.5% in 2025, outperforming its regional counterparts.

The UN report also highlights limited macroeconomic policy space across the LAC region, which constrains government capacity to advance public investment and support growth. This is particularly relevant for many Caribbean nations given their high debt levels.

Fiscal deficits in the Caribbean are estimated to have increased by 1 percentage point to 2.6% of GDP in 2024, further underscoring the economic challenges faced by the region.



External factors such as a sharper-than-expected slowdown in China and the United States could negatively affect exports, remittances, and capital flows across LAC. For the Caribbean specifically, the report emphasizes that climate-related shocks pose an elevated threat, potentially straining fiscal policies and disrupting agricultural production, which could drive up food inflation in these island economies.

Caribbean nations also face the challenge of maintaining economic stability while addressing long-standing structural issues. The report suggests that countries in the Caribbean will need to redouble efforts to increase fiscal revenues, partly by reducing tax evasion and avoidance and increasing the progressivity of tax systems.

## Global Report Launch

At the global level, the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025 report projects that growth will remain at 2.8 per cent in 2025, unchanged from 2024. While the world economy has demonstrated resilience, withstanding a series of mutually reinforcing shocks, growth remains below the pre-pandemic average of 3.2 per cent, constrained by

weak investment, sluggish productivity growth, and high debt levels.

Launched globally in a high-profile event at the United Nations headquarters in New York, the UN flagship economic report calls for bold multilateral action to address the interconnected crises of debt, inequality, and climate change. The launch featured a press briefing led by senior UN officials, including Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Shantanu Mukherjee, Director of the Economic Analysis and Policy Division at UN DESA, and Hamid Rashid, Chief of the Global Economic Monitoring Branch.



A Hummingbird  
FEATURE

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# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

CELEBRATING A DECADE OF PROGRESS

**O**n 22 December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of Women and Girls in Science to highlight the vital role women and girls play in the fields of science and technology (Resolution A/RES/70/212).

Celebrated every year on 11 February, this day is coordinated by UNESCO and UN-Women, in partnership with institutions and civil society organizations worldwide. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of equal access and participation for women and girls in science, and reinforces UNESCO's commitment to gender equality as a global priority.



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE - CELEBRATING A DECADE OF PROGRESS

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the International Day, and the theme is:

### "Unpacking STEM Careers: Her Voice in Science."

A hybrid event will take place on 11 February 2025, bringing together voices from around the world to celebrate progress, share stories, and inspire future generations of women in science.

Let's continue to champion the education, empowerment, and innovation of girls and women everywhere—because their voices are essential to building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable future.

## UWI Researcher Wins Top Prize at Global AI Innovation Challenge

This International Day of Women and Girls in Science, the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine and Trinidad and Tobago have a United Nations achievement to celebrate. At COP29 (United Nations Conference of the Parties on Climate Change), held in Azerbaijan, UWI lecturer Dr. Letetia Addison, Project Officer II in the University Office of Planning at the St. Augustine Campus, was named the Grand Prize winner of the 2024 AI Innovation Grand Challenge at COP29.

A seasoned researcher and Adjunct Lecturer at the School of Science, Computing and Artificial Intelligence at The UWI Five Islands Campus, Dr. Addison impressed the international panel of judges with her groundbreaking project, AI4SIDS. The AI-powered platform was selected from among 114 submissions spanning 62 countries.

AI4SIDS (Artificial Intelligence for Small Island Developing States) is a real-time, autonomous system designed to strengthen climate resilience in vulnerable island communities. Leveraging cutting-edge technologies like GPT-4 and Whisper, the platform integrates data from IoT devices, social media, and weather reports to deliver timely, multi-channel alerts—including mobile, TV, radio, and SMS. It also provides localized educational



content in native languages and utilizes predictive analytics to optimize disaster response mechanisms with minimal human oversight.

Dr. Addison presented her work during the AI Session of the annual UN climate conference, as part of the Technology Mechanism Initiative on AI for Climate Action. Her talk highlighted how AI can support climate adaptation efforts in developing nations, particularly in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and SIDS.

Speaking on the significance of the award, Dr. Addison shared: "As a proud UWI researcher at COP29, it was a privilege and honour to represent my team and the Caribbean region, showcasing our talent in advancing solutions that not only safeguard our islands but also inspire hope for a sustainable future in vulnerable communities worldwide. We eagerly look forward to collaborations that enhance traditional early warning systems with data-driven innovations, embodying our collective resilience and ingenuity in tackling climate challenges."

# WORLD WETLANDS DAY FEBRUARY 2

WETLANDS FOR OUR  
COMMON FUTURE



Wetlands are ecosystems, in which water is the primary factor controlling the environment and the associated plant and animal life. A broad definition of wetlands includes both freshwater and marine and coastal ecosystems, such as all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fishponds, rice paddies, reservoirs and salt pans.

These lands are critical to people and nature, given the intrinsic value of these ecosystems, and

their benefits and services, including their environmental, climate, ecological, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic contributions to sustainable development and human wellbeing.

Although they cover only around 6 per cent of the Earth's land surface, 40 per cent of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands. Wetland biodiversity matters for our health, our food supply, for tourism and for jobs. Wetlands are vital for humans, for other ecosystems and for our climate, providing essential ecosystem services, such as water

regulation, including flood control and water purification. More than a billion people across the world depend on wetlands for their livelihoods – that's about one in eight people on Earth.

## Caribbean Wetlands

In the Caribbean, "wetlands" are often only thought of as mangroves and freshwater marshes or swamps. This narrow view leaves out other important wetland ecosystems like:

- Coral reefs near the shore
- Seagrass beds
- River systems
- Underground water systems

Internationally, the definition of wetlands is broader and includes all of these ecosystems. Because of this limited understanding, wetland conservation is often not a high priority in the region. Caribbean wetlands are vital ecosystems but are undervalued and under serious threat, especially from:

- Tourism
- Industrial development
- Housing and residential expansion

To better protect wetlands, Caribbean countries need to:

- Update their policies
- Use a broader, more accurate definition of wetlands
- Recognize all types of wetlands as essential for sustainable development



## Challenges to Effective Wetlands Management in the Caribbean:

- **Lack of clear national policies:**

Most Caribbean countries do not have a National Wetland Policy - Existing natural resource policies are often separate and not integrated.

- **Poor policy implementation:**

Wetland-related policies are often not properly included in national laws.

- **Fragmented responsibilities:**

Wetland management is handled by multiple government agencies. These agencies often don't work together or coordinate specifically on wetland issues.

- **Lack of integrated planning:**

Managing wetlands by sector (e.g., agriculture, tourism) prevents joined-up planning. There is usually no national framework guiding all sectors on how to manage natural resources together.

- **Weak political support:**

There is often a lack of political will to act on environmental agreements and national wetland policies.

- **Wetlands are undervalued:**

The benefits that wetlands provide (like flood control, fisheries, and tourism) are not properly measured or appreciated.



# UN WEATHER EXPERTS FROM THE WMO CONFIRMED

ON FRIDAY THAT 2024 WAS THE HOTTEST YEAR ON RECORD, AT 1.55 DEGREES CELSIUS (°C) ABOVE PRE-INDUSTRIAL TEMPERATURES.

*This story was first published to [UN News](#).*

“We saw extraordinary land, sea surface temperatures, extraordinary ocean heat accompanied by very extreme weather affecting many countries around the world, destroying lives, livelihoods, hopes and dreams,” WMO spokesperson Clare Nullis said. “We saw many climate change impacts retreating sea ice glaciers. It was an extraordinary year.”

**Four of the six international datasets crunched by WMO indicated a higher than 1.5 degrees celcius global average increase for the whole of last year but two did not.**

The 1.5°C marker is significant because it was a key goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement to try to ensure that global temperature change does not rise more than this above pre-industrial levels, while striving to hold the overall increase to well below 2°C.



## Climate deal under pressure

The Paris Agreement is “not yet dead but in grave danger”, the WMO maintained, explaining that the accord’s long-term temperature goals are measured over decades, rather than individual years.

However, WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo insisted that “climate history is playing out before our eyes. We’ve had not just one or two record-breaking years, but a full ten-year series. “It is essential to recognize that every fraction of a degree of warming matters. Whether it is at a level below or above 1.5°C of warming, every additional increment of global warming increases the impacts on our lives, economies and our planet.”

## LA fires: climate change factor

Amid still raging [deadly wildfires in Los Angeles](#) that weather experts including the WMO insist have been exacerbated by climate change - with more days of dry, warm, windy weather on top of rains which boosted vegetation growth – the UN agency said that 2024 capped a decade-long “**extraordinary streak of record-breaking temperatures**”.

UN [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) described the WMO’s findings as further proof of global warming and urged all governments to deliver new national climate action plans this year to limit long-term global temperature rise to 1.5°C – and support the most vulnerable deal with devastating climate impacts.

“Individual years pushing past the 1.5°C limit do not mean the long-term goal is shot,” Mr. Guterres said. “It means **we need to fight even harder to get on track. Blazing temperatures in 2024 require trail-blazing climate action in 2025,**” he said. “There’s still time to avoid the worst of climate catastrophe. But leaders must act – now.”

The datasets used by WMO are from the European Center for Medium Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), the Japan Meteorological Agency, NASA, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the UK Met Office in collaboration with the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia (HadCRUT) and Berkeley Earth.

## Ocean warming

Highlighting a separate scientific study on ocean warming, WMO said that it had played a key role in last year’s record high temperatures.

“The ocean is the warmest it has ever been as recorded by humans, not only at the surface but also for the upper 2,000 metres,” the UN agency said, citing the findings of the international study spanning seven countries and published in the journal *Advances in Atmospheric Sciences*.

WMO noted that about 90 per cent of the excess heat from global warming is stored in the ocean, “making ocean heat content a critical indicator of climate change”.

To put the study’s findings into perspective, it explained that from 2023 to 2024, the upper 2,000 metres of ocean became warmer by 16 zettajoules (1,021 Joules), which is about 140 times the world’s total electricity output.

# THE Hummingbird KITCHEN

## JULIE MANGO SORBET

Servings: About 4  
Prep Time: 15 minutes  
Freeze Time: 4–6 hours or overnight

Here's a refreshing Julie mango sorbet recipe that highlights the rich, sweet flavor of this Caribbean favorite:

### What you will need:

- 3 cups Julie mango pulp (about 4–5 ripe mangoes, peeled and chopped)
- 1/2 cup sugar (adjust to taste)
- 1/2 cup water
- 1–2 tablespoons lime juice (to enhance brightness)
- Optional: pinch of salt or 1/2 tsp grated ginger for added depth

### Instructions:

#### 1. Make Simple Syrup

In a small saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Heat over medium, stirring until sugar is completely dissolved. Let cool to room temperature.

#### 2. Prepare Mango Purée

In a blender, purée the chopped Julie mango until smooth. You should have about 3 cups. Strain if you want a super-smooth sorbet.

#### 3. Combine Ingredients

Mix mango purée with the cooled syrup and lime juice. Taste and adjust for sweetness or acidity. Add salt or ginger here if using.

#### 4. Chill

Refrigerate the mixture for at least 1 hour (cold base freezes better).

#### 5. Churn Ice Cream Maker:

Pour into an ice cream maker and churn according to your machine's instructions (about 20–25 minutes).

No Machine? Pour into a shallow dish and freeze. Every 30–60 minutes, stir with a fork to break up ice crystals until smooth (3–4 hours).

#### 6. Freeze Firm

Transfer to an airtight container and freeze for 2–4 hours until scoopable.

### To Serve:

Scoop into chilled bowls or glasses. Garnish with fresh mint, a wedge of lime, or a drizzle of coconut cream.

You can add coconut milk and or rum for an extra twist. If you're watching your sugar intake, you can also prepare this without sugar.

# CONTACT US

ECLAC Subregional Headquarters  
for the Caribbean,

1 Chancery Lane, P.O. Box 1113,  
Port of Spain,  
Trinidad and Tobago.

## MEDIA CONTACT

Tel.: 1 868 224 8067

E-mail: [eclac-media-pos@eclac.org](mailto:eclac-media-pos@eclac.org)



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