



IRMA AND MARIA

CHASING THE FOOTSTEPS
OF HURRICANES IRMA AND
MARIA

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

HOW CAN CARIBBEAN
COUNTRIES UNLOCK THEIR
POTENTIAL?

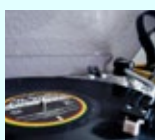
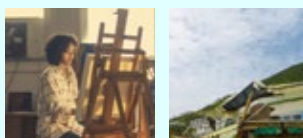
DE-RISKING

FIND OUT ABOUT ECLAC'S
SOON TO BE RELEASED
POLICY BRIEF



ECLAC

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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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December Events

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World Aids Day
1 December 2017

2

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
2 December 2017

4-6

UNEP, United Nations Environment Assembly,
Third session, Nairobi
4 - 6 December 2017

10

Human Rights Day
10 December 2017

18

International Migrants Day
18 December 2017



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Nov 28

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



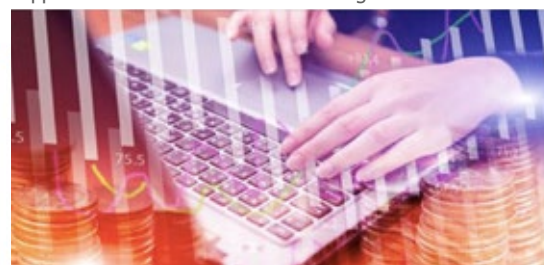
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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Nov 21

Officers from the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union countries gathered to gain a better understanding trade analysis to support future Economic Union trade negotiations.



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Nov 20

ECLAC presented the organization's debt for climate adaptation swaps proposal for Caribbean nations stricken by the recent hurricane season, at the UN Headquarters in New York.



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HOW TO UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



Articles in this section:

- Bolstering Jamaica's film and music industries
- ECLAC discusses creative industries at UWI event



BOLSTERING JAMAICA'S FILM AND MUSIC INDUSTRIES

The most important challenges for the music industry in Jamaica are song writing, artist management and marketing and distribution. Similarly for the film industry, script writing, marketing and distribution remain the main bottlenecks in the sector. The consensus among the music experts is that these are the low-hanging fruits that need to be prioritized in order to advance the development of their industry.

A soon to be published ECLAC study, entitled 'The Film and Music Sectors in Jamaica: Lessons from Case Studies of Successful Firms/Ventures', made this assessment and also explored the value chain of both sectors, film and music, with a view to formulating strategic recommendations for their further development. ECLAC's study was undertaken to assess the difficulties, lessons learnt and economic contribution of the film and music sectors in Jamaica. Ultimately the study will identify the

success factors that have resulted in the global competitiveness and sustainability of individuals/firms and /ventures within the film and music sectors. The final study will be available later this year.

Two years ago, Kingston, Jamaica was designated a United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Creative Music City. That designation cemented prevailing sentiments about the island's musical output in the form of distinct musical genres given to the world in the latter half of the 20th century in mento, ska, rocksteady, reggae, dub, and dancehall. Kingston is now one of 116 cities in the creative cities network, benefiting from partnerships and the sharing of best practices toward a sustainable music economy. In addition to music, ECLAC's study also examined the Jamaican film industry, and recommends the establishment of an upgraded training programme in script writing. In addition, the leading

agencies engaged in promoting film, including the Jamaica Film and Television Association (JAFTA) and the Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), are encouraged to develop an exchange programme and invite leading script writers in major markets such as the United States, UK and India to collaborate with local script writers through workshops.

Jamaica has a long tradition in film, although the sector has been dominated by on-location foreign films. Jamaica has produced more than 141 films, with the number rising in excess of 200, if we include films with part footage in Jamaica and the rest in other countries. One of the earliest recorded films shot in Jamaica was the 'Daughter of the Gods' in 1908. Also, 'The Devils Daughter' filmed in Jamaica in 1939 was the first American black feature film. A range of genres of films have been produced in Jamaica, from documentaries to drama to action thrillers to horror. ■



ECLAC DISCUSSES CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AT UWI EVENT

ECLAC Caribbean recently participated in a workshop on the current state of the creative industries in the Caribbean, which focussed on identifying policy recommendations for Governments. Organized by the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at UWI Saint Augustine, the event was supported by the University of Havana, Cuba.

These discussions come on the heels of two ECLAC studies on the creative industry sector, namely 'The Art and Craft Sector and its Potential for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Caribbean' and 'The Film and Music Sectors in Jamaica: Lessons from Case Studies of Successful Firms/Ventures'. Discussions centred on boosting the sector and articulating its development within the context of regional integration efforts, as well as strategies to build a network and broaden creative and cultural databases.

Representing ECLAC Caribbean were Economic Development Officers, Willard Phillips and Michael Hendrickson.

Phillips' focussed on the potential contribution of cultural industries to Caribbean economies and societies. Key areas considered were market structure, the potential contribution of the sub sector, the role of investment and trade policy, and the development of intellectual properties in the creative economies of the region.



From left: Michael Hendrickson (ECLAC), Dr. Jacqueline Martinez (UWI), Leeanna Seelochan (ECLAC) and Willard Phillips (ECLAC)

"We must consider the trade potential of the sector, especially when research shows that since 2002, global trade in creative products is trending upwards. Between 2002-2015, developing economies had even overtaken developed economies in terms of share of creative goods exports – with key players being China and India," he stated.

Hendrickson, in another panel, spoke about the value and composition of Jamaica's music industry, and offered recommendations for facilitating its development. His presentation focussed on the case study analyses of successful firms and music ventures in Jamaica, as part of ECLAC Caribbean's study on the issue. ■

JAMAICA - BOB MARLEY MUSEUM CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF ICONIC SMILE



On Saturday, 2 December 2017, the Bob Marley Museum will celebrate the 41st anniversary of the iconic Smile Jamaica Concert, with a twist. To commemorate this defining moment in Bob Marley's life, when he performed to an audience of over 80 thousand, just two days after being shot, the museum will launch a series of night tours that will culminate in the very room in which this assassination attempt on the singer occurred.

The museum will also pay tribute to the Reggae legend with a journey through the different musical styles in which he dabbled. The celebration will take place at Marley's home at 56 Hope Road with performances by Runkus, Blvk H3ro, Leno Banton, Royal Blu and several other special guest performers, all paying tribute to the legend.

Under the theme, 'Make Someone Smile', this year's celebrations will also include a charitable component. Part of the proceeds from the event will be used by the Bob Marley Foundation to fund a music room at the Haile Selassie High School. Patrons are also being asked to donate

non-perishable items which will be distributed to Reddies Children's Home supported by the foundation.

Marie Bruce, general manager of the Bob Marley Museum stated, "The focus is making someone smile, the same way Marley chose to bring hope to people, despite the attempt on his life. The Bob Marley Foundation continues to honour Marley's stance on positive thinking and attitudes, as it is even more relevant today." The Foundation has donated over J\$2.5 million to support music rooms at both Alpha Institute and the Grace Kennedy's STEAM (homework) Center. Part proceeds also benefitted the Haile Selassie High School for a special music project.

The first Smile Jamaica Concert was held on 5 December 1976 and was headlined by Marley. The concert was a collaborative effort by Bob Marley and the Wailers and the then cultural section of the Prime Minister's Office. Marley delivered a passionate 90-minute set, a mere days after the assassination attempt. ■

“

This is the first time in the modern history [...] that an entire island has witnessed the wholesale destruction of its infrastructure, both public and private.

Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Dr. the Hon. Hubert A. Minnis

”





FEATURE ARTICLE

CHASING THE FOOTSTEPS OF IRMA AND MARIA

Homes are flattened, buildings roofless, water pipes smashed and road infrastructure destroyed. As we fly from one island to the next, driving along broken roads, walking through crippled streets, the scenery around us is drenched in despair. Hospitals are without power and schools have disappeared beneath the rubble. Almost 200 lives lost across Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Puerto Rico and Sint Maarten. Crops uprooted; where there was greenery, now there is only dust and dirt. Families torn apart, livelihoods crushed and questions on the future that lies ahead still dwindling in uncertainty in the minds of thousands of distraught people. I gaze around, staring at what I have come to help assess as part of the ECLAC damage and loss assessment (DALA) team, in the aftermath of a hurricane season in the Caribbean.

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A heart-wrenching odyssey of hope and despair



UNITED NATIONS

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Hurricanes Irma and Maria, two category five hurricanes caused Armageddon-like destruction. Irma was the most powerful hurricane recorded in the Atlantic. Maria, on the other hand, evolved from a category one to a category five hurricane in a mere 18 hours.

For over a month now, the DALA team and I have been travelling across the region, providing technical assistance to Governments to capture the full extent of damage and losses incurred by communities and countries in the aftermath of the hurricanes. There are a dozen of us, and we have become a tight-knit group. We are a mixture of ECLAC staff and international consultants; we are structural and civil engineers; we are economist, statisticians and social affairs officers; we are power and telecommunication experts; we are physicians and environmental experts. And then there is me, the storyteller; notepad and GoPro camera always at hand.

As we sit in what is left of one of the transit airport lounges, water dripping from the ceiling, loose wires exposed, waiting for the UN Humanitarian Assistance (UNHAS) airplane to pick us up, I glance through the media records that I compiled a few weeks ago, before leaving ECLAC Caribbean headquarters in Port of Spain. In



Destroyed medical supplies

Anguilla, 90% of all government buildings have been severely affected and between 80 and 90% of the island's schools damaged. In Barbuda, 99% of all buildings have been destroyed, forcing all of its 1,800 residents to evacuate the island, leaving it unhabitated for the first time in 300 years. In the British Virgin Islands, 90% of the houses on the North side have structural or total damage. In Cuba, 132 schools suffered damage. In Dominica, the beautiful rain forest, which gave life to the island-nation's tourism industry, has been flattened and its agriculture destroyed. The majority of its fishing boats have been lost and the country literally cannot feed

itself. In Sint Maarten, roughly 90% of the infrastructure has sustained damages or has been completely destroyed. On South Caicos, between 80 and 90% of homes have been damaged; schools, government buildings and hospitals have been badly hit. The list goes on.

Anguilla*, the Bahamas**, the British Virgin Islands, Sint Maarten*, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, in each of these we have applied ECLAC's DALA methodology. As we gather data and crunch numbers, I realize the importance of bearing witness to the plight of the Caribbean people, for we are speaking to those most in

need, and capturing the words of the most vulnerable. As we talk to government officials, interview community members and compile evidence, I become ever more aware that we must succeed in creating a point of departure for national dialogue around disaster risk reduction, vulnerability reduction, sustainable development and adaptation to climate change.

The DALA methodology was first developed back in the '70s to estimate the effects and impacts of natural hazards. Since then, the methodology has evolved and has been customized for application in different areas of the world. Over the years, ECLAC has led more than 90 assessments of the social, environmental and economic effects and impacts of disasters in 28 countries. If that doesn't sound enough, then I should probably add that our team leader is none other than Dr. Omar Bello, Coordinator of ECLAC Caribbean's Sustainable Development and Disasters Unit, i.e., the guy who revised the actual DALA Handbook.

As I try to access the internet by connecting the router to the cigarette lighter of the car parked outside the room that I have rented for the week, I smile at the thought that DALA missions are generally carried out when the emergency stage of a disaster has been completed or is nearing conclusion, so as not to interfere with the vital recovery phase. "I guess this is the exception to the rule", I say to myself, as the pump shuts down once again, leaving us with no water for the rest of the night.

Everywhere we go, we are welcome. Doors open for us, decision makers greet us into their offices, people welcome us into their homes, or make

“

The extent of the destruction [...] is unprecedented. Hurricane Irma would have been easily the most powerful hurricane to have stormed through the Caribbean.

*Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda,
the Hon. Gaston Browne*

”





CHASING THE FOOTSTEPS OF IRMA AND MARIA: A HEART-WRENCHING ODYSSEY OF HOPE AND DESPAIR

room for us in their makeshift temporary accommodation. Experiences are shared under the reassurance of the complete confidentiality of our missions. Be it in government buildings, hurricane shelters or struggling shanty towns, there is always a story to be told, information to be gathered and a lesson to be learned. From leaders and policy makers to community workers and illegal immigrants, everyone has been deeply touched by the devastation caused by Irma and Maria. Ministers and Prime Ministers have described the desolation as being absolutely heart-wrenching, beyond imagination; their thoughts and prayers with all those affected. Most agree that this is quite possibly the first time in modern history that the subregion has witnessed this scale of wholesale destruction to public and private infrastructure.

Meeting after meeting, field visit after field visit, our team endeavours to rigorously unearth the layers of devastation in each island – for if destruction is cross-cutting across all islands, its effects and impacts vary in each location, and thus need to be assessed critically. We learn about the staggering losses that holiday resorts are suffering, as they scramble to patch their hotels back together just in time for the Christmas and winter season.

The livelihoods of hundreds, in some cases even thousands of people are at risk. Maids, chefs, waiters and most hotel staff face the prospect of being made redundant or – in the best of cases – being put on reduced wages. There is absolutely no time to waste, and that is why we are here. We are here because application of the DALA methodology will provide these countries with the means to



Damage assessment team inspects damage to solar panels during field mission to Anguilla

determine the value of the most affected geographical areas and sectors, together with corresponding reconstruction priorities. We are here because the findings of our investigation will allow governments to estimate the capacity necessary to undertake reconstruction, and thus the extent to which cooperation may be needed. As one tourism-employed single mother confessed to us while we stood in the doorway of her damp and ill-lit single-room apartment – her two-month old baby sleeping blissfully under a mosquito net to avoid the heightened risk of malaria, Chikungunya and Zika brought about by the precarious living conditions –, immediate reconstruction is the only option.

Senior government officials tell us about the startling difference between pre and post-Irma government budgets for 2017. Houses, roads, government and commercial

buildings, bridges and coastlines: all have been impacted, all require unforeseen major investments. Meanwhile, the overall price tag keeps on rising. Moreover, our team is not only estimating the replacement value of totally or partially destroyed physical assets that must be included in the reconstruction program, but also assessing losses in the flows of the economy that arise from the temporary absence of the damaged assets, in addition to the resulting impact on post-disaster economic performance, with special reference to economic growth, the government's fiscal position and the balance of payments. There's a lot to digest.

As the days roll on, the grief around us is unrelenting. Unperturbed, we seek solace by redoubling our efforts. Digging through countless reports, documents and paperwork, we extract inputs from all credible sources of information in order to build the baseline data that we need. Censuses, population estimates, household listing surveys, labour force surveys, household budget surveys, well-being surveys as well as various economic and tourism statistics all provide vital inputs to our efforts.

The warm sea breeze reminds me that we are in a tropical paradise, but is of little comfort to those for whom paradise has turned into a living nightmare. A very high percentage of people whose homes have been ravaged by Irma and Maria have no form of home insurance and, even among those that do, many only have third party coverage; which is a tantalizing prospect since I am told that "only persons with comprehensive insurance will receive a payout".

Surviving almost certain death just to face the prospect of not having a roof over your head is horrific, but not being able to know the fate of your loved ones during a hurricane is an even worse feeling, as one survivor admitted while slowly cleaning his spectacles with some rough kitchen paper. Telecommunications are often the first thing to go during a hurricane. So, even if you survive, you are left in the dark, unable to know what happened to everyone else.

I am convinced that things must change. Public policy and development plans must be identified to deal with these disaster-driven needs that profoundly affect public

well-being. Fortunately, this is yet another aspect in which our DALA mission will assist. I wonder if this might in fact not be the most important contribution of our mission. After all, the Caribbean's exposure to natural disasters is unlikely to decrease any time soon. As the yellow post-it stuck on the wall of one emergency response official we interview recited, "hope for the best, plan for the worst".

Caribbean governments are well aware that the devastation suffered this year is a timely and painful reminder of the region's vulnerability to climate change. As a result, there is little doubt in the minds of the subregion's policy makers that even worse hurricanes lie ahead in the years to come, as the impacts of climate change may likely intensify in the immediate future. I wonder, however, if the rest of the world also understands this. I guess it really should, since a plethora of studies indicate that the Caribbean is expected to confront more intense and frequent weather events due to climate change. Although one-off hurricane events cannot be attributed to climate



change, the reality is that its effects are already being manifested in the region with higher surface temperatures, coral bleaching and other effects.

Between 1990 and 2008, ECLAC estimates the total impact of natural disasters in the Caribbean at US\$136 billion in constant 2008 dollars. This does not include the catastrophic 2010 earthquake in Haiti that cost over US\$6.4 billion and resulted in over 225, 000 deaths. Of this total, the impact on the economic sectors amounted to US\$63 billion or 46% of the total, for the social sectors it was US\$57 billion (42% of the total). Meanwhile, the infrastructure and environmental sectors were impacted to the tune of US\$12 billion and US\$3.5 billion (9% and 3% of the total, respectively). The agriculture sector was badly affected, accounting for over 45% of the impacts in the economic sector, while tourism accounted for 32% of the fall-out.

As we drive through a dirt road on the way back from the local seaport, the sudden rocking of our car accentuated by a subtle 'bang' forces us to stop to change a flat tyre – punctured no doubt by the countless debris

on the road. Within seconds, we are surrounded by several helping hands. Adults and children offer us their tools and 'local expertise' in tyre changing. In the aftermath of the hurricanes, solidarity across countries has been outstanding, as governments have pledged their collaboration to supporting those most in need. Cognizant that solidarity must begin at home, leaders across the subregion have underscored that the character and values of the Caribbean people are riding on how the subregion responds to the needs of the Caribbean community as a whole. In the words of the Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Dr. the Hon. Hubert A. Minnis "how should we respond to our Caribbean neighbour and CARICOM Partner? We should respond the way we would want others to respond if we were in such dire need and desperation."

Caribbean governments look upon these challenging times as an opportunity to build a more resilient future. Now more than ever, I am convinced that the region needs to prioritise investment in climate change adaptation alongside disaster risk reduction measures such as enforced building codes, improved zoning and better insurance coverage to reduce future fall-out on its economy and society.

While the propellers of our small UNHAS plane cut through the last rays of daylight, the sun gracefully setting below the hazy skyline and our missions drawing to an end, I close my eyes and see the faces of all those whom we met during our travels; faces of sorrow, faces of grief, hope and despair. The Caribbean people and their leaders know by faith and the experience of history that new life can come out of tragedy, and that despair can be translated into success.

Each one of us in the DALA team and indeed everyone at ECLAC is redoubling their efforts to make sure that this vision is realized, so that the countries of the blue Caribbean Sea are able to increasingly embrace strategies to build back better; to plan differently; to prepare and do more wisely. The very survival of their peoples depends on this. ■

* Missions to Anguilla and Sint Maarten benefitted from the collaboration of colleagues from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank

** The mission to The Bahamas was financed by the InterAmerican Development Bank

From top to bottom: The damage assessment teams for The Bahamas, Anguilla, Sint Maarten and the Turks and Caicos Islands





FISCAL IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION AGEING

Of all the countries in the Caribbean, Barbados is the one farthest along in the process of ageing – with the highest percentage of persons under 15 years and over 65 years. Around 2010, the median age for Barbados was approximately 37 years, five years older than the next highest, which was 32 years for Trinidad and Tobago and 26 years for the Bahamas.

These are some of the findings of an ECLAC study on the 'Fiscal Implications of Population Ageing', which assesses the fiscal implications of population ageing in 10 Caribbean countries - Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The study examines movements in the growth

components of fertility, mortality and migration, and changes in the age structure of the countries, and analyses the impact of demography and policy on current levels of spending.

Comparisons are made with the countries of the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), with their older population structure, in order to highlight the importance of population age distributions in key areas such as education, pensions and health care.

As population age structures will change in the coming decades, the costs of publicly provided education, health care and pension benefits will change dramatically. Falling child dependency ratios and increasing old-age dependency ratios will have major implications for the cost of providing education, pensions and healthcare

services.

ECLAC Caribbean's study will also provide a set of projections which model how these expenditures are likely to evolve as economic growth allows for with more generous social spending, or changes in the age profile of expenditure, as a percentage of GDP.

The research will support one of the most basic demographic variables, age and the age structure of populations, is a very crucial factor in the allocation of resources in general and of social services in particular. Understanding the changing age structure which accompanies the global demographic transition is therefore an important first step in the process of developing and implementing fiscal policies.

The dramatic changes in age structure which have characterized the



ECLAC SUPPORTS JAMAICA'S DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT SERIES

demographic landscape of many countries in the 20th century have also been evident among Caribbean countries and will continue in the coming decades. The elderly (persons 65 years and over) population for the 10 countries in the study is projected to rise over two and a half times over the next 30 years, reaching a staggering 19% share of the total population at 2050.

The changes in the relationship to the population of working age are expected to be even more dramatic. By 2050 the ratio is expected to be three elderly to every 10 working-age person. The change for Barbados, described earlier as the demographically oldest country, over the same period, will be from two to every 10 to around five to every 10.

ECLAC Caribbean's study will be published within the next few weeks. ■

Jamaica is set to benefit from ECLAC Caribbean's technical assistance in December, with support for the Government's 2017 Dialogue for Development lecture series, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Statistics Unit, Dr. Abdulahi Abdulkadri, will engage in dialogue meetings with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), the organizing committee of the Dialogue for Development, the 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee, and other stakeholders to discuss Jamaica's implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its preparation for the upcoming Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High Level

Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The Dialogue series was initiated as a forum for Jamaican citizens to express their views and opinions on issues of public importance. This process serves as an input in the policy development framework of the PIOJ.

For the 10th anniversary, the event will highlight the SDGs, through series of public dialogues in the parishes and a main lecture in Kingston. The deliberations and outcome of this lecture will inform SDG consultations and sensitizations activities planned for the parishes in 2018.

Participants will include government representatives, the private sector, academia, students, NGOs, community representatives, and the United

SNEAK PREVIEW ARTICLE

Look out for more
in upcoming issues!

POLICY BRIEF ON DE-RISKING

"The policy brief will assess the actual and potential economic impact of the loss of correspondent banking services..."



Caribbean countries will soon have access to a policy brief on de-risking from ECLAC Caribbean. In anticipation of its release, the Hummingbird is pleased to offer its readers a sneak preview of the policy brief.

The policy brief will assess the actual and potential economic impact of the loss of correspondent banking services to the financial sectors in three Caribbean countries – Antigua and Barbuda, Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis.

These countries were selected based on the openness of their economies and dependence on

international trade, foreign direct investment and remittances. The countries' openness has exposed them to negative external shocks arising from changes in GDP growth of major trading partners, global recessions, financial crises and most recently the financial shock due to the loss of correspondent banking relationships, referred to as 'de-risking' in the region.

Against this backdrop, the policy brief will discuss spill-overs of the de-risking shock to key areas of these economies. In particular, the brief will analyse the knock-on effects on the tourism, financial services and productive sectors.

The brief will be complemented by an ECLAC Caribbean study, entitled 'Economic Impact of De-risking on the Caribbean: The Cases of Belize, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda', which will in turn suggest feasible short and medium-term approaches to addressing the challenges associated with the loss of correspondent banking relationships.

Both the policy brief and the study will be available early next year. ■

TRINIDAD'S CHAMPION BAKER



Although Michelle Sohan entered the world of cake making and decorating by accident, in 2017 she represented Trinidad and Tobago in Milan, Italy, at the World Cake Designers Championship and won the title for 'Best Tasting Cake' in the world.

The theme of this year's competition was Discovering Chocolate and Coffee, and her team's creation featured the country's local chocolate and cocoa heritage with cocoa dancers, coffee and cocoa paintings of workers in the fields and chocolate bonbons.

Back in 1998, while studying for her Master's in Food Technology, Michelle fell and injured her neck and back and she couldn't continue her studies. What happened next is as magical as the cakes she creates. In 2003 she opened Bakery Treatz, a bakery in Chaguanas, Trinidad.

Michelle's first international competition was in Virginia, USA at the National Capital Area Cake Show in 2014. Since then, she has entered numerous competitions in North America, doing very well on many occasions, one of which was the South Florida Cake and Candy Expo in 2015, where she entered the Expert Cake category after having spent 37 hours completing the masterpiece.

In 2016, she won a Teddy Bear Cake Challenge in Virginia with her cake partner, cake artist Zane Beg from the US television show, 'Sweet Life'. Over the years, Sohan has spent time travelling and expanding her creative talents, and being inspired by new ideas and meeting people. This she said has helped her improve her knowledge and her business.

Sohan recalled growing up not liking the idea of baking. She said, "I may have been actually allergic to the kitchen". However after baking two cakes at a time in her mother's oven, Sohan baked her way into a full-fledged bakery.

Sohan was invited to take part in the competition in Italy, and is the first ever Caribbean entrant in that event. Judging was done on the overall display, taste of the cakes, and then preparation of a mini version explaining the cake creation. Michelle is formally trained as a Professional Masters in Education (PME) Master of Cake Decorating which is an internationally recognised certificate for professional cake decorators. Her first degree is in Agriculture which she obtained at the University of the West Indies (UWI). ■



POLICY CHANGE NECESSARY FOR OFFSHORE FINANCIAL CENTRES IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Offshore financial sector is a major economic contributor to both the Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda economies. In Nevis, it is the second economic contributor behind Tourism while offshore gaming has been a huge source of employment for Antigua and Barbuda. The offshore sector also impacts hotel stays and room availability on both islands. It has also made regional financial services more sophisticated and has led to a more developed capital market system which boost their image in the international financial market.

Given its growing economic importance to Caribbean economies, consideration should also be given to regional integration given issues around size in the offshore sector; and there should be more effort placed on strengthening public-private sector partnership as it relates



to legislation and policy. In the medium-term, however, efforts should be centered on pursuing partnerships with international institutions for the provision of correspondent banking relations (CBRs); establishing a regional statistical bureau; and improving, supporting and building regional capacity in prudential oversight.

These were some of the recommendations that emerge from a soon-to-be-published ECLAC Caribbean study which assessed the existing and potential challenges to the offshore financial sector, and developed policy proposals and regional strategies for addressing these challenges.

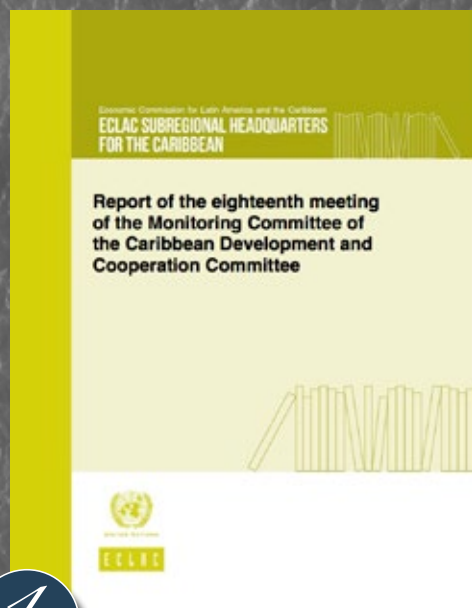
The study surveyed the islands of Antigua and Barbuda, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, with data

also gathered from the Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands and the Cayman islands. International Financial Centres (IFCs) are a significant part of the Caribbean financial landscape, and are defined as countries or jurisdictions with specialised financial regimes, which facilitate investment flows of capital mobility internationally. In the same vein, Regional Financial Centres (RFCs) are groups or blocks of countries, which have specialties in the offshore financial business, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In ECLAC's study, public officials in Caribbean RFCs noted a crucial link between the offshore sector, employment creation and economic viability. While lack of data has created some difficulty

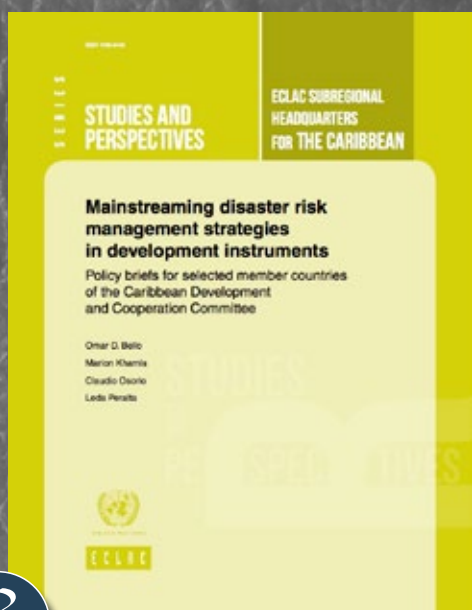
in measuring the exact economic contribution of the sector, the economies under study have benefitted from capital flows generated from the IFCs, in addition to the development of more sophisticated capital markets and financial structures.

The study will also feature a set of distinct recommendations to be implemented over the short, medium and long term. These suggest important roles for the private and public sector and regional and multilateral agencies. ■



1.

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



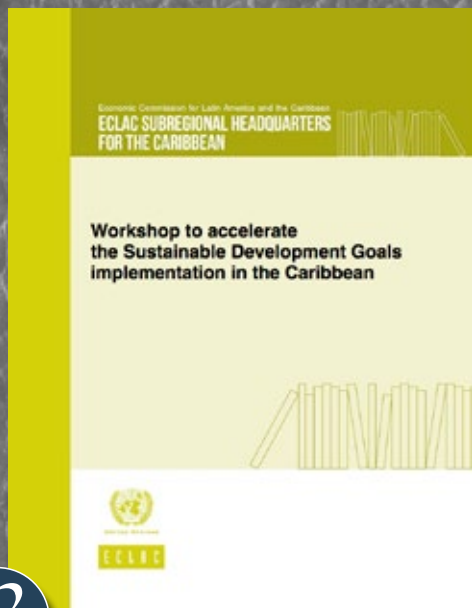
3.

Mainstreaming disaster risk management strategies in development instruments: Policy briefs for selected member countries of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

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Report of the Workshop to
Accelerate the Sustainable
Development Goals Implementation
in the Caribbean

2.

DIANE'S CORNER

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



DIANE QUARLESS
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

12/11



ECLAC's ongoing Damage and Loss Assessment Efforts

“We are resolved to collect
the data that presents the most
accurate picture of the degree of the
subregion's vulnerability to extreme
climatic events”

#DirectorsTake

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





Fast Facts: TradeCAN and MAGIC workshop

The event: A capacity building workshop on trade data compilation and analysis.

The objective: This capacity building workshop was convened to strengthen the skills and knowledge in trade data compilation and analytical techniques of participants, who will be better equipped to engage in trade policy formulation, negotiations and implementation of trade agreements.

The content: Participants were trained in the use of a suite of trade software packages: Trade Competitiveness Analysis of Nations (TradeCAN); the Module to Analyse the Growth of International Commerce (MAGIC Plus) and the World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS).

The participants: OECS public officials, including 32 senior officers from Ministries of Trade, Customs divisions, Statistics departments, among others, of Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) countries.

The organisers: The event was coordinated by ECLAC Caribbean and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission. Hosted by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The background: ECLAC Caribbean and the OECS Commission have a shared objective of building trade-related capacity and promoting economic growth and development among ECCU Member states.

The location: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
The dates: 14 to 16 November 2017. ■

Over 30 “Likely New” Species of Biodiversity Found at Guyana’s Kaieteur National Park

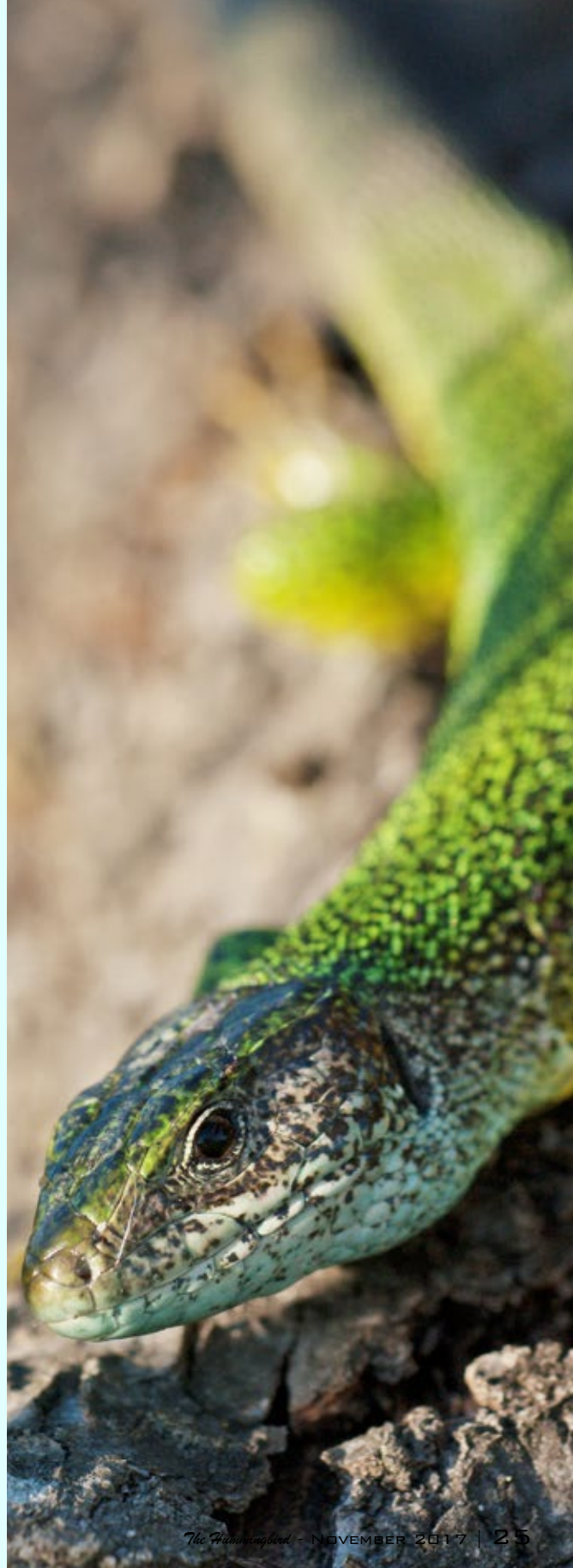
More than 30 species of fish, plants and other creatures that may have been undiscovered until recently, have been found in Guyana’s Kaieteur National Park.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) made the disclosure recently as it launched its Kaieteur-Upper Potaro Biodiversity Assessment Survey Report, following the second in a series of three expeditions. WWF’s Country Manager Aiesha Williams said the team “recorded more than 30 species likely new to science”, including six species of fish, three plants and 15 aquatic beetles and five odonates, which are large predatory aquatic insects.

“Analysis is being done to be sure that they are actually new,” she said. “This adds to the area’s enormous conservation value, and if new species are still being recorded, there could be more.”

Kaieteur National Park is already known to be home to more than half the birds, 40 per cent of odonates, 30% of mammals and even 43% of amphibians known to be in Guyana.

Williams added that she expected the information gathered from the expedition to be used in a “positive manner to guide further research and to make informed decisions about land use, good environmental governance, freshwater management and sustainable management of the region’s natural resources”. ■



A CARIBBEAN CHRISTMAS

Christmas calls for major celebration, in all Caribbean islands. With plenty of partying and visiting friends and family, each island has its own brand of uniqueness.

European colonists brought Christianity to the Caribbean, originally to the native Arawak and Carib Indians, though not many of them remain to practice it. Today, European customs have survived everywhere across the region, to include Christmas morning church services, feasting on Christmas Day, singing, dances, the giving of gifts and Christmas cards, Santa Claus and Christmas trees.

When Africans were brought to the Caribbean as slaves to work on the sugar plantations, they adapted their own customs to Christianity, and since then the festival began to evolve and take on a character of its own.

In Jamaica, fearsome duppies (ghosts) roam the countryside at Christmas, the most legendary being the three-foot horse, whose terrifying approach was heralded by the sound of irregular hoofbeats, and rolling calf, who weakened the hearts of rural folk when they shuffled by, dragging chains along the pathways at night.

These stories probably date back to the plantations, when slaves customarily went up to the great house on Christmas morning

to serenade its occupants with songs. Rewarded with a two- or three-day holiday, they made the most of it in their own gardens, reaping provisions both for food and to sell among themselves at the Christmas market.

Three hundred years later, the Jonkonnu dancers or “masqueraders” of Jamaica are still a part of Christmas, especially in rural areas. Grotesquely costumed dancers are accompanied by musicians playing flutes, drums and tambourines, as they go about soliciting money. With names like horse head, devil, belly woman, pitchy patchy and actor-boy, who would dare refuse them?

In Antigua, too, Christmas traditions are primarily of European and African origin, including carol trees, jam bull, highlanders, long ghosts and jumpa-ben. Carol trees are made from a stick with several cross-bars, like a telephone pole; with lanterns hung from the branches, and are carried from house to house by carol singers, accompanied by the music of an accordion or concertina.

In Antigua, jam bull is a grotesque-looking character based on an African witch doctor. Dressed in dry banana leaves and old clothes, he was probably created by African slaves to satirise their British masters: the costume closely resembles that of the Sensay dancers from Guinea

who performed at the end of the first stage of work initiation. In the plantation era, Christmas was not only festivity: it was a very serious time in the islands, and the three-day holiday for slaves always brought rumours of uprisings to the masters’ ears, some of them true.

Perhaps the most lavish of modern Christmases can be found in Trinidad and Tobago, whose diverse history and relative wealth have given the festival a national flavour in which the large non-Christian communities join. The season begins as early as November, when the cooler breezes hint at the tail end of the rainy season and brilliant red poinsettias and lacy white Christmas bush begin to transform gardens. Christmas carols and local songs take over radio stations and the parang season begins.

Parang, originally from Venezuela, is the traditional Christmas music of Trinidad — lively Spanish-style music that calls for fancy steps and swinging hips. Traditionally, paranderos went from house to house serenading neighbours and sampling ponch-de-creme (a well-spiced version of eggnog), sorrel, ginger beer and strong drinks like rum and whisky, as well as food. Parang is infectious music, strongly rhythmic, hard to resist, and it accompanies many of the season’s parties.

Trinidadians expect to put on



a few pounds for Christmas, confident that they will lose them afterwards in the frenzy of Carnival. People visit friends and family during the season, and you have to sample every auntie's black cake and taste every granny's sorrel, not to mention the lady-next-door's ginger beer and the home-made pastelles, a gift from Trinidad's Amerindian and Spanish heritage - a cornmeal pocket stuffed with minced beef, highly seasoned, with capers and olives among the essential ingredients.

The Christmas setting is important, so the house must be cleaned thoroughly, the tree put up and decorated in good time, and Christmas greeting cards hung up or collected in a prominent place. Houses are painted, even if only on the outside, and decorated with new curtains, furnishings and appliances. The season ends with the massive parties of Old Year's night, followed by the exhausted somnolence of New Year's Day. Most of the islands celebrate Christmas in a similar way these days, but with their own favourite

dishes and customs.

In Barbados, for example, along with the turkey and ham, the speciality is jug-jug, a dish made with ground meats, guinea corn and pigeon (gungo) peas. This may have originated with nostalgic Scottish settlers who needed a tropical substitute for haggis.

For Jamaicans and Guyanese, ham is a must, along with turkey. Jamaicans serve spicy jerk chicken, and curry goat is likely to be served as well, especially if the family is a big one. In Guyana and Tobago a goat, sheep or cow may be slaughtered to feed a big family. Chow mein and fried rice is a favourite in Guyana; garlic pork, introduced by the Portuguese, is popular in Antigua and in Trinidad, where it is a must for the Portuguese community.

Christmas cakes range from rich dark fruit cake, often called Black Cake, to the lighter brown fruit cake which has no burnt sugar or browning; both are laced with rum or wine. In most islands, dark red

sorrel is a non-alcoholic Christmas beverage made from a plant which produces its fruit at this time of year; but in Jamaica, it is a strong alcoholic liqueur, made with Jamaican white rum and sipped very carefully by the prudent! After unwrapping gifts and demolishing the Christmas meal, Barbadians might retire to the Queen's Park for the annual Police Band concert, while Jamaicans get ready for all-night-till-morning parties. Young people in Trinidad and Tobago "burst bamboo" — their homemade explosions are contrived from bamboo and carbide.

The Christmas season lasts longest for the French islands, which continue to celebrate until Three Kings' Day on January 6, commemorating "les Rois" or the coming of the Three Wise Men.

This is the day when people everywhere take down their Christmas trees, even in islands where the date is not significant. ■



REACHING OUT TO CHILDREN IN SOUTHERN TRINIDAD

In keeping with the tradition of commemorating UN Day by visiting local schools, this year ECLAC Caribbean reached out to the Morne Diablo Roman Catholic Primary School, located about two hours South of Port of Spain. The ECLAC Caribbean contingent teamed up the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, and with the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.

Approximately 80 children in standard 4 and 5 classes gathered in the church next to the school to take part in what promised to be a fun and

interactive morning. After an entertaining game of 'SDG bingo' facilitated by Narissa Seegulam of the RC's Office, which very much captured the attention of the young audience, the Coordinator of ECLAC Caribbean's Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit, Alexander Voccia, took centre stage.

Alexander dazzled the children with a flurry of fun-facts, questions, riddles and hand-outs related to the work of the UN in general, and to the importance of sustainable energy in particular. Leveraging the children's personal experience

of flooding in the Morne Diablo area, Alexander drove home the message that energy efficiency and renewable energy are the way to go. Or, as Alexander himself put it, "remember: every time you turn off the tap when you have finished washing your hands; switch off the lights when you leave a room; or use your bicycle instead of asking for a ride in the car, you are helping to avoid flooding in Morne Diablo".

The children's overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to Alexander's pitch spoke volumes about how receptive they were to the message. ■

ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

United Nations Wellness Day

Members of staff of all the United Nations agencies recently gathered in Port of Spain for a one-of-a-kind UN Wellness Day.

On 30 November 2017, the band stand area outside the House of the President of Trinidad and Tobago at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port of Spain was transformed into a health and wellness arena, as staff came out to support this activity.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health in Trinidad and Tobago, testing was provided for diabetes, cholesterol, blood pressure, and other ailments, while information and handouts were distributed on HIV/AIDS, LGBT awareness, mental health, and gender related issues including domestic violence, among others.

UN Wellness Day was conceptualised around the UN's 16 days of Activism, which is a global gender-based series of events in support of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which is celebrated from 25 November - 10 December, the International Day for Human Rights.

Here are a few photos from the Wellness Day 2017. ■



Trinidad Black Cake

What you will need:

Cake:

1 lb unsalted butter
1 lb sugar
8 eggs
1 tsp lemon essence
2 tsp lime rind (zested)
2 tsp almond essence
2 tsp vanilla
1 lb all-purpose flour
4 tsp baking powder
2 tsp mixed spice
1/2 tsp grated nutmeg

Fruit Base:

1 lb pitted prunes
1 lb raisins
1 lb currants
1 bottle cherry brandy
1 bottle rum and/or Bailey's
2 tbsp Angostura bitters

Browning:

1 lb brown sugar
1/2 cup boiling hot water

Have on Hand:

1 more bottle of rum

Method:

Three to Five Days Before:

Up to 5 days before you make the cake, chop up all the fruits for the fruit base. Place in a large bowl, pour in Angostura bitters, cherry brandy and rum (Bailey's makes it extra special). Leave in a cool corner, covered, to soak up the liquor.

On the Day Of:

Blend Fruit Base: Pour the soaked fruit and juices into a blender and blend until thick and still a bit chunky (like tomato sauce). Note: If you have been macerating your fruit for a minimum of a month in advance you can skip this step.

Prepare Browning:

Burn sugar until caramelized, add hot water gradually. Mix well and leave to cool.

Main batter:

1. Preheat oven to 250F.
2. Cream the butter and sugar.
3. Add eggs one at a time, mixing to incorporate.
4. Add lemon essence, lemon zest, almond essence and vanilla.
5. Mix and sift flour, baking powder, mixed spice and nutmeg.
6. Gradually add sifted ingredients to creamed mixture.
7. Mix in fruit base puree and 'browning'.
8. Pour batter into greased tins that have been doubly lined with brown paper or parchment paper.
9. Bake for 3 hours.
10. Once removed from the oven soak the tops with equal portions of the remaining bottle of rum.

NOTE: For those who avoid alcohol for religious or personal reasons, soaking can be done using grape or apple juice!



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