

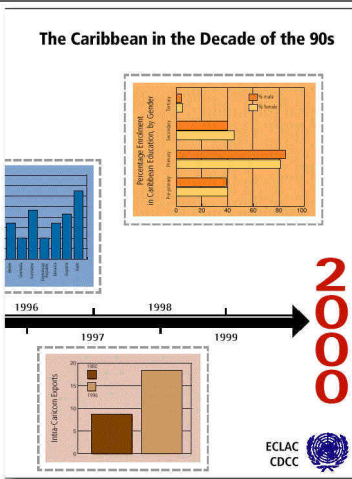
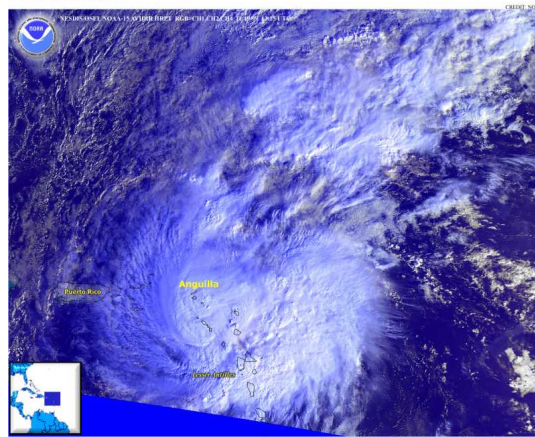
March 2000

...in this issue...



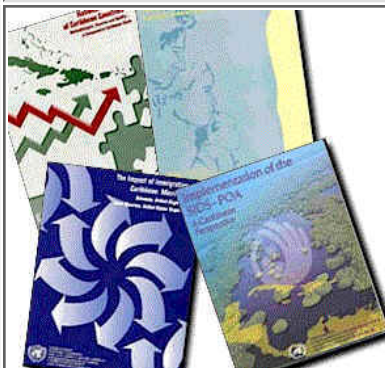
FEATURE: CDCC's 25th Anniversary. This article explores the early years of the CDCC and its co-operation with other inter-governmental forums operating in the region, and looks at possibilities for its continued relevance into the new millennium. [GO >](#)

The Anguillan tourism sector, while on the steady road to recovery, may still be suffering from the impact of Hurricane Lenny by the end of the year 2000. An ECLAC team examines the impact of Hurricane Lenny on Anguilla. [GO >](#)



BOOK: The Caribbean in the Decade of the Nineties. This definitive work attempts to highlight the major economic and social challenges and achievements of countries of the region, during the last decade. [GO >](#)

Abstracts and listings of recently produced publications and documents from ECLAC/CDCC. [GO >](#)



CDCC: 25 Years of Co-operation and Development

The Eighteenth Session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) convened in March 2000. The Year 2000 also marks the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the forum. During the past quarter of a century, since the creation of the CDCC, there have been many changes in both the regional and international political landscape, which have both redounded and been causes of concern to member states.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of CDCC member countries...

[CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of Past Sessions of the CDCC...

This article explores the early years of the CDCC and its co-operation with other inter-governmental forums operating in the region, and looks at possibilities for its continued relevance into the new millennium.

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CDCC Member States

The CDCC comprises 16 countries with full-member status...

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

...and seven associate members of ECLAC...

**Anguilla | Aruba | British Virgin Islands
Montserrat | Netherlands Antilles
Puerto Rico | United States Virgin Islands**

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Countries and Dates of Past CDCC Sessions

In the March 2000, the Eighteenth Session of the CDCC was held at the very venue at which the Committee was inaugurated in 1975, the Chaguaramas Hotel & Convention Centre, Trinidad & Tobago. Following is a listing of past sessions of the CDCC.

SESSION	YEAR	VENUE
CDCC I	1975	Havana, Cuba
CDCC II	1977	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
CDCC III	1978	Belize City, Belize
CDCC IV	1979	Paramaribo, Suriname
CDCC V	1980	Kingston, Jamaica
CDCC VI	1981	<i>Technical Session</i> - St. George's, Grenada
CDCC VI	1982	<i>Ministerial Session</i> - United Nations Headquarters, New York
CDCC VII	1983	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago
CDCC VIII	1984	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
CDCC IX	1985	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago
CDCC X	1987	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago
CDCC XI	1988	St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands
CDCC XII	1989	Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles
CDCC XIII	1991	Kingston, Jamaica
CDCC XIV	1992	St. George's, Grenada
CDCC XV	1994	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
CDCC XVI	1996	<i>Technical Session</i> - Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago
CDCC XVII	1998	<i>Technical Session</i> - Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago <i>Ministerial Session</i> - Aruba, Netherlands Antilles
CDCC XVIII	2000	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

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CDCC: 25 Years of Co-operation and Development ... cont'd

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Historical Background

Three years after the creation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean again took another bold step towards integration, co-operation and self-determination. In May 1975, at the Sixteenth Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean (ECLAC), Cuba and Trinidad & Tobago spearheaded an initiative to create the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as an intergovernmental body that would co-ordinate activities relating to development and co-operation among its member states.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of CDCC member countries...

[CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of Past Sessions of the CDCC...

The CDCC was established during a period of considerable international turbulence on the political, as well as economic fronts. It was the period in the immediate aftermath of the first major "oil shock"; amidst a "Cold War" that seemed intractably entrenched. It was also a period of profound, even radical, questioning of the allocation of benefits within the international system and of the structures that were available for international discourse, particularly between the developing countries of the south and their developed counterparts of the North. This was the era of the call for a New International Economic Order by countries of the "Third World", a concept that had acquired general currency by that time.

In the context of the Cold War, the incorporation of Cuba into the membership of the CDCC represented a significant development at the regional level, especially bearing in mind that Cuba was also in the vanguard of the movement for the creation of the forum.

The establishment of the CDCC ushered in a period of intense activity and dynamism as member states sought to bring to fruition the ideals set out in the Committee's newly articulated mission, which was specifically directed to economic and social development through co-operation.

The creation of the Committee also marked a watershed in the management of Caribbean issues within the United Nations system. From that time onward, policies and programmes for the implementation in the Caribbean subregion would be developed and operationalised on the basis of ideas, principles and strategies defined by the subregion itself. Indeed, this drive for recognition of the unique identity of the CDCC countries culminated in 1984 when the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) became the Economic Commission for Latin America **and the Caribbean** (ECLAC).

The basic impetus behind the establishment of CDCC was the reality that "the Caribbean countries shared a geographic, cultural and historic proximity" and "have also inherited similar economic structures and have similarities in the majority of the social and economic problems they face". As such, the *raison d'être* was "to strengthen the unity and co-operation... in order to carry out joint activities that will benefit the sub-region's economic and social development and increase its bargaining power as regards third countries and groupings of countries".

Those areas identified for achieving joint policies include economic complementarity, trade, obtaining financial resources, agriculture, tourism, transportation, industry, energy, the transfer of technology and technical know-how, health and education.

Since its inception, the CDCC has sought to foster and strengthen technical and economic co-operation among its membership, and between these members and other developing countries. Its activities are carried out under the regular work programme of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, which also is the secretariat of the Committee.

As secretariat to the CDCC, ECLAC co-operates with other intergovernmental bodies in the Caribbean area, including the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

While ECLAC and the CDCC are distinct and separate entities, they enjoy a unique relationship. The CDCC serves as a platform for the exchange of experiences and perspectives. As an intergovernmental body, the CDCC provides an essentially political forum for dialogue towards enhanced co-operation in support of the further development of the Caribbean subregion. It is also intended to advance regional integration.

The work programme of the ECLAC, for its part, is the vehicle by means of which the benefits of socio-economic development for CDCC member states are explicitly pursued. Whereas the CDCC has had to grapple with certain constraints over the years, the work programme of ECLAC remained in place. Indeed, ECLAC is regarded as a very important source of technical assistance to member states, in matters related to such areas as trade, the review of economic performance, sustainable development and social issues, among others.

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CDCC: 25 Years of Co-operation and Development ... cont'd

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CDCC and selected inter-governmental organisations in the Caribbean

• Interactions among the CDCC membership

At the governmental level, a number of Agreements have been concluded among [CDCC members](#), covering such areas as trade, diplomatic relations, and technical assistance, among others. Many of these agreements have been concluded at the bilateral or subregional level.



These include the Free Trade Agreement signed in March 2000 between CARICOM and the Dominican Republic, the result of roughly four years of negotiation.

In addition, CARICOM states, Haiti and the Dominican Republic participate in CARIFORUM; the mechanism generated by the European Union for the conduct of its technical assistance programmes in the Caribbean.

The wider Caribbean region provides the locus of a number of integration movements. Among these are:

1. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which incorporates the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS);
2. The Latin American Economic System (SELA); and
3. The Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

• The CDCC and CARICOM

The CDCC has always worked closely with CARICOM, as a direct result, *inter alia*, of the considerable overlap of the membership of both entities. The fact that the impetus for the creation of the CDCC arose from within the CARICOM membership might also be relevant in this regard.

This close working relationship was formalised in 1995, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for Co-operation between both institutions. The Memorandum provides for, *inter alia*, co-operation, consultation, exchange of information, reciprocal representation at meetings and joint implementation of projects. Invitations to participate in selected meetings of each entity are extended on a reciprocal basis.

• CDCC and SELA

The Constituent Declaration of the CDCC, as well as the Panama Convention by virtue of which SELA was established, were adopted in 1975. CDCC member states have expressed the view that the Latin American Economic System (SELA) offered a broad framework for implementing concrete projects and initiatives, as well as for co-ordinating common actions and positions in all fields, thus facilitating greater identity of interests between the Caribbean and the rest of Latin America.

Over the years, since the forum's inauguration, Ministers of the CDCC member countries have re-stated their resolve to promote the development of activities and projects beyond the scope of the CDCC, within SELA, which was recognised as an appropriate regional-level framework for co-operation, consultation and co-ordination among the member countries.

Collaboration between these two bodies has continued over the years. One of the more tangible examples of this is the Roundtable on "External Relations in the Caribbean in the next Millennium", which was organised in October 1998. The Roundtable, organised by SELA, was hosted at the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC/CDCC.

• The CDCC and the ACS

The establishment of the ACS in 1995 has served only to provide new opportunities for collaboration among Caribbean countries and the various regional forums, as they embark upon programmes geared towards sustainable development in an effort to enhance the well being of their peoples. The close involvement of the ECLAC/CDCC in the development of the ACS, is yet another example of its willingness to collaborate and co-operate with the major inter-governmental agencies of the wider Caribbean. The significant overlap of the membership of these bodies and also of their work programmes provides a sound basis for co-operation, which is already in progress in a number of significant areas of mutual interest.

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CDCC into the new millennium

The increasing number of processes and initiatives towards further integration in the Caribbean region, offer new and exciting opportunities for regional collaboration and co-operation. For example, the fact that the CDCC and ACS often have overlapping mandates provides the perfect environment for the exploitation and realisation of synergies between both forums.

Additional reasons why the Committee remains relevant to the regional integration process include the following:

1. The full integration of Cuba into the region, as evidenced by the establishment of diplomatic relations with that country by all independent members of the CDCC.
2. The general intensification of "Caribbean-Latin American relations", in the context of a wider ECLAC membership.
3. The recognition, on the part of the CDCC membership of the continuing relevance of an organisation of its type in the regional context, as well as in the context of the United Nations which can, among other things, bring to bear an objective perspective on development issues in the region.
4. The critical role entrusted to the ECLAC/CDCC in the implementation of the SIDS Plan of Action (SIDS/POA) and similar outcomes of other "World Conferences". This implies an enhanced role for the CDCC, both in the aggregation of national interests and priorities into regional positions for articulation at the global level, and in the translation of decisions taken at the global level into concrete action at the regional and, even, national level.
5. The strategic role that can be played by the organisation as a forum which is smaller than the ACS, that is, specific to the needs of the insular Caribbean, but more inclusive than CARICOM.
6. The forum provided by the CDCC for the exchange of experiences among its membership, recognising that while not all small States are "small" in the same way, they nevertheless, share a unique range of problems.
7. The access provided to a number of non-independent countries and territories to a regional inter-governmental organisation in which full recognition is given to their concerns and their general participation. Such access also facilitates direct participation in a number of global forums.

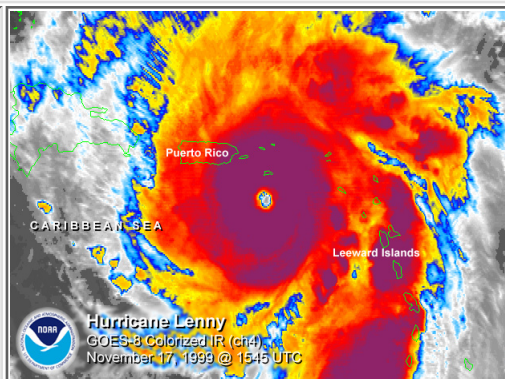
In response to an unprecedented level of requests within the recent past, the ECLAC/CDCC Secretariat has provided invaluable technical assistance in a number of strategic areas to member States, within the limits of its resources. Such assistance has included the execution of projects in areas spanning the strengthening of statistical offices; preparation of regional officials for FTAA negotiations; the execution of studies on specific economic and social sectors; and the evaluation of the impact of natural disasters.

These interventions serve to underscore the continuing relevance of the CDCC, in areas that impact directly and favourably, on the sustainable development prospects of its membership, and the welfare of the people of the region.

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The Impact of Hurricane Lenny on Anguilla



The Anguillan tourism sector, while on the steady road to recovery, may still be suffering from the impact of Hurricane Lenny by the end of the year 2000.

This is the prognosis from a recent ECLAC study, carried out on behalf of the Government of Anguilla.

Between December 12 and 17 1999, officers from ECLAC's Subregional Headquarters in Mexico and Port-of-Spain conducted a fact finding mission, as a co-operative effort, in response to a request from the Government of Anguilla to evaluate the economic, social and environmental impact of Hurricane Lenny on this country.

According to the findings of the mission, substantial infrastructure works are still required, and restoration of beaches will require some time. Much work has already taken place, but full economic recovery is still far off.

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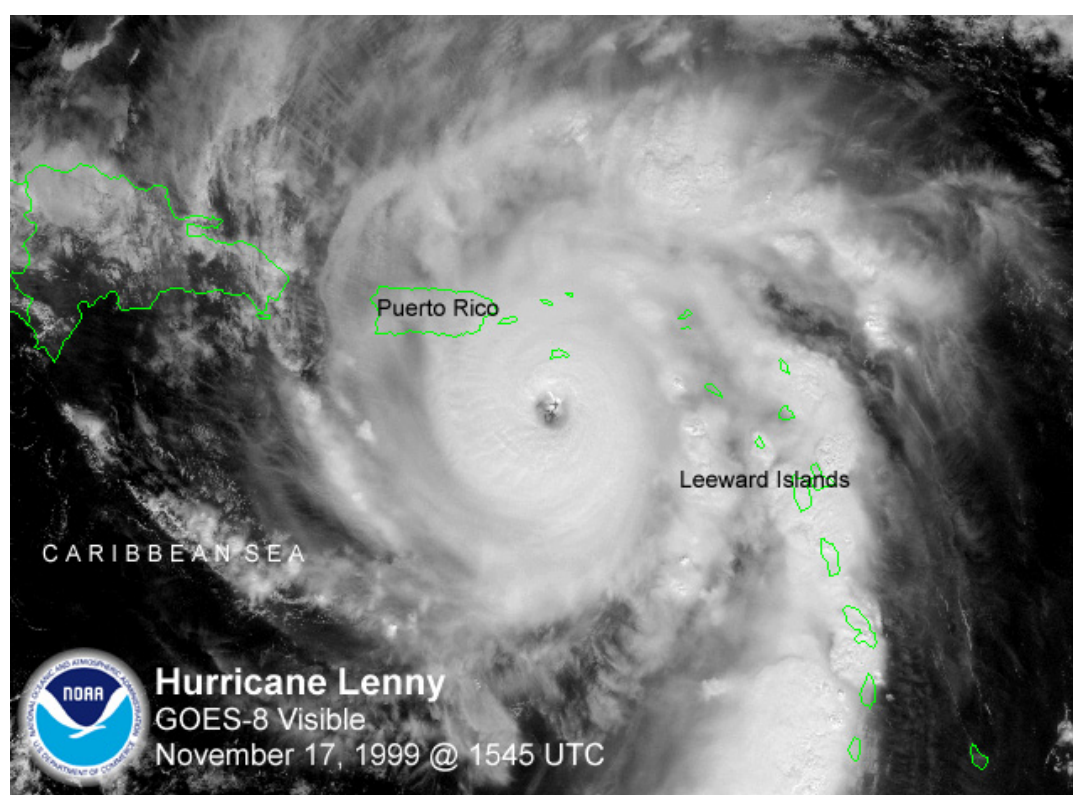
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Lenny, the hurricane

Hurricane Lenny was an atypical hurricane, which developed in the Caribbean Sea late in the season. Its late season strength was not its only unusual feature; it also followed an unprecedented path. The tropical system advanced from the southwest, making its track toward the islands a once-in-a-century event.

Typically, when a tropical system forms at that time of year in the Caribbean, it heads straight north and rarely makes it to hurricane status. However, Lenny made its way across the Caribbean Sea by moving in an atypical west-to-east pattern, which saw it start on the northern coast of Venezuela and move east-northeast toward Puerto Rico and the northern Lesser Antilles.



Furthermore, when Lenny reached the Northern Leeward Islands, movement was stalled and the hurricane remained practically stationary within the Anguilla – St. Maarten – St. Barts area.

Lenny has been classed as a ‘wet’ hurricane. From 8 a.m. on 17 November till 10 a.m. on 20 November 1999, rainfall amounted to 489 mm (19.28 inches). Hurricane José, which preceded Hurricane Lenny, was also a ‘wet’ hurricane. Because of the passing of Hurricane José, the soils in the islands were already loosened and saturated and facilitated the widespread flooding which followed the rainfall from Lenny.

Since 1995, hurricane activity in the Caribbean has intensified. This most recent disaster – Hurricane Lenny -- is part of a series of similar calamities which affected the region in 1999 especially. Prior to Hurricanes Luis and Marilyn in 1995, Anguilla had not suffered a direct hit from a major hurricane (category 3 or above) since Donna in 1960.

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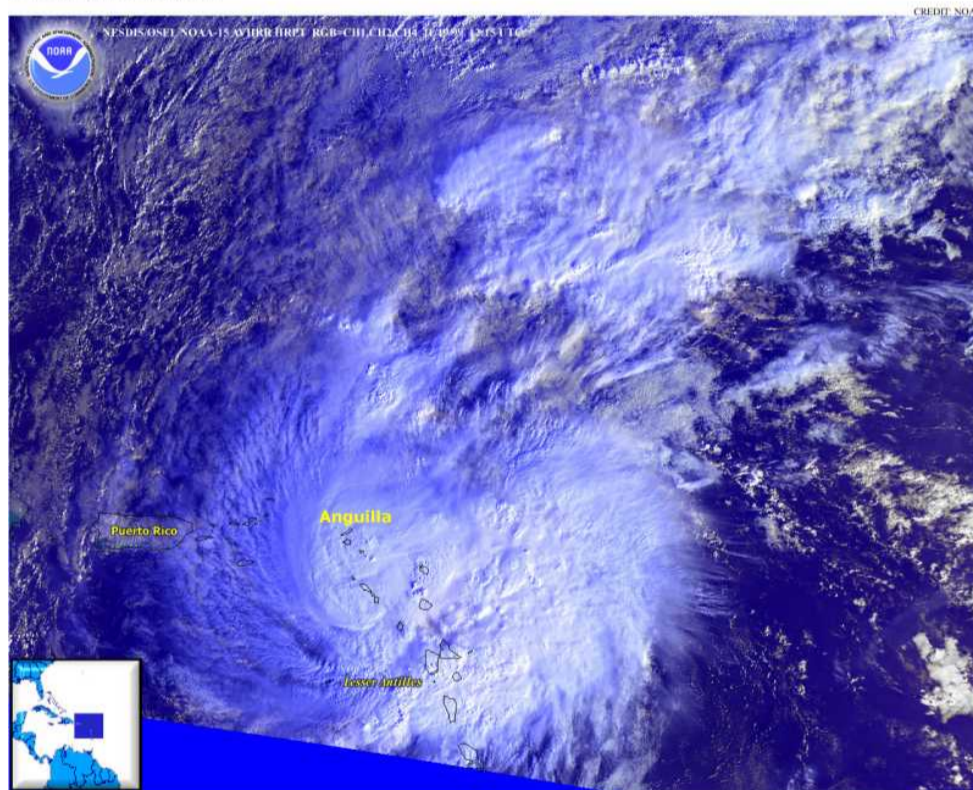
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The damage

According to the report, storm surges and swells, together with rainfall, resulted in severe flooding, and caused most of the damage to the island's infrastructure and environment.

Dead and decaying animals, solid waste, sewage, as well as fertilisers and pesticides, among others, contaminated flooded areas. The foundations of several properties were exposed and made more vulnerable by the erosion of beach and dune systems. Even in those cases where there was no direct infrastructural damage, because the coastline has retreated inland, many properties have been rendered much more vulnerable to future hurricane damage, or even the ordinary winter swells.

Hurricane Lenny continues to move very slowly eastward in the eastern Caribbean. The storm is still centered near or over islands in the northern portion of the Lesser Antilles chain. The storm has moved very little in the past 24 hours which has resulted in a prolonged period of very strong winds and very heavy rains for some of these islands.



While all sectors of the Anguillan economy have experienced damage, it is mainly the hotel and restaurant sector which has seen its productive capacity being impaired for much of this year.

Tourism is particularly important to Anguilla. The contribution of hotels and restaurants, which forms only part of the tourism industry, to GDP is about 32 per cent, and travel comprises about 73 per cent of the export of goods and services. Given the island's dependence on tourism, this impairment of capacity is expected to have repercussions throughout the economy.

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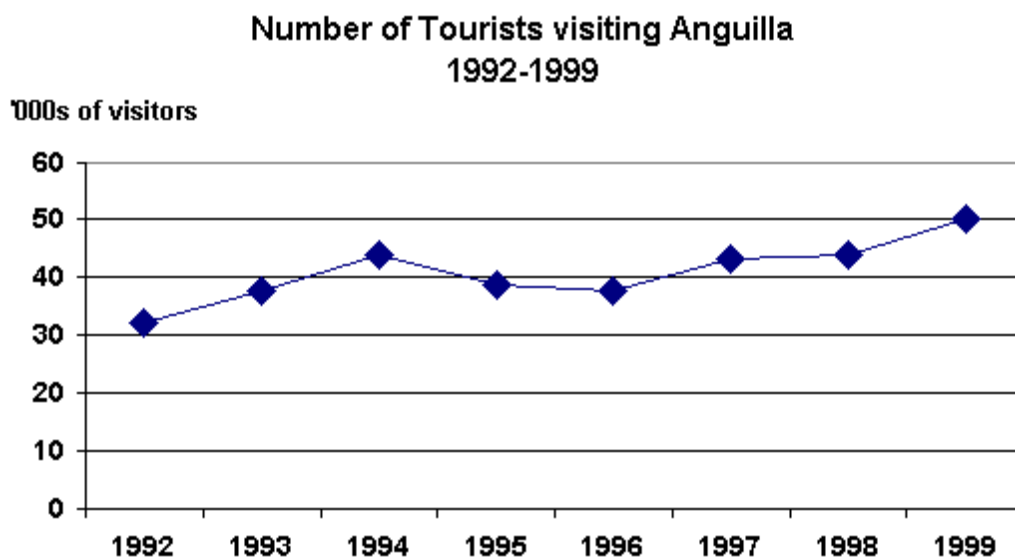
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The impact on Anguilla's tourism sector

Tourism development began only since the early 1980s, growing from a low 6,498 tourist arrivals in 1981, to 43,705 in 1994. Much of the infrastructure and superstructure development on the island took place during a period in which hurricane activity was below normal. The figure below shows the number of visitors to the island between 1992 and 1999, prior to Hurricane Lenny.



SOURCE: 1992-1998 Government and ECCB data. 1999 Mission estimates, except for contribution to GDP, which is a Government / ECCB estimate.

Before Hurricane José and particularly Lenny, the outlook for 1999 was favourable, with tourist arrivals running at 12.4 per cent higher for the January-September period as compared with the same period in 1998. With the December 1999 opening of a major hotel development, and the subsequent expansion of the island's room capacity, the prognosis was for 13 to 14 per cent higher tourist arrivals in 1999 as compared with 1998. Despite the two hurricanes, total tourist arrivals grew by 6.63 per cent to 46,782. At 1998 prices, the anticipated 1999 total visitor expenditures would have been about 12 per cent above the 1998 level, or roughly US\$65 million (EC\$175.5 million).

The occurrence of Hurricane Lenny late in the year had two immediate impacts, which made the circumstances different from the impact of Luis in 1995. Firstly, the reconstruction period carried further into the high season. Secondly, beaches that had been eroded had less opportunity to recover, and costly immediate beach restoration works (dredging) became necessary.

At the time of the mission, estimates of damages to the tourism sector were not yet available as insurance adjusters were still in the process of finalising their work. Furthermore, it was difficult to obtain damage estimates on a property-by-property basis.

Insurance sources estimated that the total insured value of hotel property damages (including landscaping) plus loss of business insurance amounted to US\$70 million (EC\$189 million). Of this figure, US\$50 million is property damage, and US\$20 million is loss of business.

However, loss of business due to capacity constraints is only one aspect of a reduction in tourist arrivals. Immediately after a hurricane, tourist arrivals will drop initially because of limited access but later on, primarily because of bad publicity. According to the mission report, the robustness of the Anguillan tourism product is main reason why the "bad publicity" drop in tourist arrivals did not occur, as was initially projected.

While accommodation capacity may be fully restored by the middle of 2000, experience has shown that the restoration of tourist arrivals may take considerably longer. Indeed, the experience of Anguilla following hurricanes Luis and Marilyn shows that the after effects of a hurricane may linger for a period of two to three years. Projections are that by the end of this year, the Anguilla tourism industry will not have fully recovered from the impact of Hurricane Lenny.

In terms of lost tourism earnings, the mission's projections are that total losses might be in the vicinity of US\$26.9 million (EC\$72.6 million). The following Table, based on Mission estimates, illustrates this.

Estimated Loss in Tourism Earnings (US\$ million)

1999	
Low Season	3.7
High Season	3.7
Subtotal	7.4
2000	
Low Season	11.9
High Season	7.6
Subtotal	19.5
TOTAL LOSSES	26.9

SOURCE: Mission estimates.

In examining the impact on employment in the tourism industry, the immediate effect is that employed hotel staff will face a cut in their earnings, because of the loss in service charges. Many hotels on the island have made efforts to retain their full time staff. For the year 2000, it is estimated that the loss of earnings as a result of reduced service charges may exceed EC\$2 million.

The Anguilla Government may also find its earnings substantially reduced for various reasons, until the economy picks back up. A reduced tourism plant means less accommodation for visitors, which also translates into reduced revenues from both accommodation and departure taxes. In addition, the government's move to extend duty free privileges on imports for reconstruction of the tourism sector means that its collection of import duties – an important component of its recurrent revenue – will be quite reduced.

Restoration of beaches, as well as repairing the damage to of marine habitats with the subsequent loss of commercially important fish species, will require some time. The major hotels on Anguilla have already undertaken beach repairs, but substantial infrastructure works are still required.

The main concern is the cost associated with an effective programme for vulnerability reduction. Past patterns of development have reinforced damages by hurricanes Lenny and Jose, and given the prospect for increased hurricane frequency in the region, the problem becomes even more urgent.

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The way forward

Apart from Anguilla, other tourism-dependent economies in the region have become more and more vulnerable with each passing hurricane and tropical storm. The incidence of Hurricane Lenny has served to highlight the defencelessness of the smaller islands in the face of such natural disasters. With the region possibly entering a period of high hurricane intensities, Caribbean governments need to focus on reducing their countries' vulnerability to this type of disaster, especially.

The main effects of this type of natural disaster are flooding in low-lying areas, land slippage, as well as beach and coastal erosion. A combination of effectively adhered to land use policies, economic instruments and island-wide coastal zone management programmes could be amongst the options to reduce these types of exposure.

In addition to disaster mitigation initiatives, these economies also need to explore economic diversification and new sources of government revenue, to reduce their dependence on one economic activity. Among the options that could be explored are offshore-related activities, e-commerce, and other opportunities offered by the overall process of globalisation.

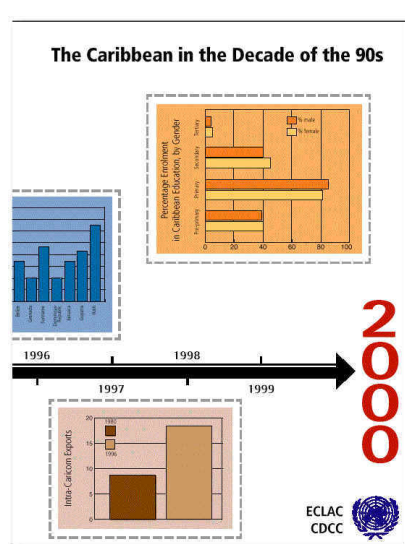
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BOOK: The Caribbean in the Decade of the Nineties

ECLAC looks at the major economic and social issues in the 1990s and how these have shaped the future of the region



The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will be publishing, later this year, *The Caribbean in the Decade of the Nineties*. This definitive work attempts to highlight the major economic and social challenges and achievements of countries of the region, during the last decade. Following are extracts from this publication.

The mostly small island States of the Caribbean display a number of characteristics which, although common, to some of the larger developing countries tend to put them at a greater disadvantage in their economic and social development efforts. Resource limitations and problems related to smallness and remoteness are among the main factors impacting on the economic performance, sectoral specialisation and vulnerabilities of the small island States. These countries are highly dependent on trade with the ratio of trade to GDP above 100 per cent, in many instances. Their markets are small and their exports are highly concentrated on a narrow range of products and services and markets. Their geographical location makes them particularly vulnerable to hurricanes and pressures of population and economic activity within a limited land space seriously threaten their fragile ecosystems. The development of these countries has been taking place in an increasingly integrated world economy, marked by progressively higher trade and financial flows and increasing competition.

Caribbean countries have undertaken major economic and social reforms in the 1980s and 1990s. These included macroeconomic reforms to correct the balance of payments and fiscal deficits, which had developed in the latter part of the 1970s and early 1980s, and to stabilize the economy. They also included trade and financial reforms to open the economies further and take advantage of the opportunities available in the increasingly liberalized world economy. In addition, increased focus continued to be put on issues related to social equity. Foremost among these were the efforts made to increase employment, improve access to health and education and alleviate poverty, especially in those Caribbean countries which had experienced slow growth or political instability in the decade under review.

Efforts were also made to improve gender equity in the subregion through the implementation of policies and programmes to improve the social and economic status of women, especially in the improvement of women's access to education. However, other issues of social equity, such as poverty alleviation, better access to education and health, are still among the challenges facing the Caribbean. Migration and population growth continued to modify the characteristics of Caribbean population. Other demographic dynamics, including the ageing of the population and their socio-economic implications will continue to require the adoption and implementation of appropriate population policies as well as a major restructuring of the social services, including education, health and social security systems.

The adoption of the Small Island Developing States Programme of Action (SIDS POA) in 1994 focused the attention of governments in the subregion and the world community on the need to preserve the fragile environment of these mostly island States, and adopt sustainable development policies where economic, environmental and social issues are addressed simultaneously. Although there has been progress in some countries, the Caribbean subregion still needs, with the assistance of the international community, to put into place a range of concrete programmes and projects, for the further and more effective implementation of the SIDS POA.

In the 1990s, economic growth generally resumed in those countries, that is, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and the Dominican Republic, after contraction in the 1980s. Growth also continued, although at lower rates in those countries, such as the OECS, whose economies grew at high rates in the 1980s. These economic gains remain fragile, however, given the structure of the economies and their lack of diversification and can disappear very quickly as a result of a hurricane or a decline in the foreign exchange earnings from the main export commodities, i.e. bananas in the OECS. The long-standing objective of diversifying the Caribbean economy remains to be achieved despite progress made in some countries, like Trinidad and Tobago. The moderate rates of growth have not been able to generate enough employment to absorb the labour force seeking employment.

The challenges facing the countries in the next decade include the maintenance of macroeconomic stability, the transformation of production structures with improved productivity, the move towards environmental sustainability, improved income distribution and the improvement in the performance and accountability of governments.

FOLLOW these links to read more highlights from the Report:

[trade performance](#) | [macroeconomic performance](#) | [unemployment](#) | [changing social structures](#) | [poverty](#) | [environment](#) | [information technology](#)

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Highlights from The Caribbean in the Decade of the Nineties



TRADE PERFORMANCE

At the end of the 1990s, Caribbean exports continued to be highly concentrated and vulnerable to price fluctuations and the trade policy changes in their main destination countries. Oil and petrochemicals continued to dominate the exports of Trinidad and Tobago while sugar, bananas and tourism remained the major exports of the OECS countries and Belize. Guyana continued to export mainly rice, sugar and bauxite, while Barbados remained heavily dependent on the exports of tourism services. In addition to bauxite, Jamaican exports are still dominated by tourism, clothing and assembly manufacturing. <<



MACROECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

In the 1990s the economic performance of Caribbean countries varied a great deal. Countries, such as Haiti, Cuba, Montserrat and the Netherlands Antilles, experienced negative average growth rates. Also, growth in the OECS countries and Belize slowed somewhat compared with the performance in the 1980s. On the other hand, there was a resumption of growth in the economies of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana from contraction in the 1980s. Fiscal deficits, inflation rates and external debt burden were generally moderate in the subregion, except for Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname. <<



UNEMPLOYMENT

The fluctuating and moderate growth rates achieved by the countries in the 1990s were not sufficient to absorb the labour force. Unemployment remained relatively high in the Caribbean throughout the decade. In 1996, unemployment rates for all the Caribbean countries were in double digits except for Antigua and Barbuda. The incidence of unemployment varies among the various subgroups of the population, but it tends to be highest among the young females and males. Despite these high levels of unemployment, Caribbean countries continued to experience shortages of workers with high technical and managerial skills and good work ethics. Education and training systems continued to fall short of creating skills required by the market. The reform of the education system to improve the flexibility of the labour market has been recognised and is being pursued, along with other policies to improve employment in the subregion. <<



CHANGING SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Significant changes in the social structures of Caribbean countries have been driven by the rate of population growth, the ageing of the population, migration, urbanization and the increasing negative effects of HIV/AIDS. The low or negative growth rates of the economies have also had a generally negative impact on the social structures. Population growth has been slow over the 1980s and 1990s, because of a number of factors, which have been more evident over recent years. These factors include the continued fall in fertility rates and the relatively high levels of emigration. The Caribbean has experienced a general decrease in fertility rates, mainly due to the increasing levels of education of women and the sustained implementation of family planning programmes in many countries. <<



THE ENVIRONMENT

The 1990s saw acceleration in the awareness of the importance of coastal zone management, mostly because impacts of past negligence were affecting the profitability of the tourism industry. There remains, however, a wide range of management approaches. In some countries the problem is recognised, but not studied; in others, assessments have begun while countries, such as Barbados, have been leading the region in implementing coastal rehabilitation programmes by attacking the two major problems of land-based sources of pollution (mostly sewerage) and beach stabilisation. Land-based sources of pollution remain areas of major concern. This decade has seen the institution of many investment projects, mostly in sewage but also in solid waste, throughout the Caribbean region. At the beginning of 1999, the Caribbean region had over 60 waste-related infrastructure projects valued at between 750 million and 1 billion dollars either ongoing or planned. <<



POVERTY

The marked slowdown in a number of Caribbean economies and the subsequent restructuring and adjustment may have resulted in increasing levels of poverty in some countries. In Haiti, 65 per cent of the population is estimated to be living under the poverty line, while the proportion of that category in Barbados and Bahamas was only 8 and 5 per cent, respectively. Poverty tends to impact disproportionately on women since female-headed households are more likely than male-headed households to fall under the poverty line. Female-headed households typically have more members, but lower labour force participation and lower wages. Most countries have put in place action plans to eradicate poverty, including the implementation of employment creation and training programmes. <<



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Despite these significant strides, the Caribbean region has not yet arrived at a point where the full potential of the Internet and other information technologies are being fully exploited. Whether or not one subscribes to the paradigm which suggests that size and distance are increasingly irrelevant, the Caribbean does enjoy some tremendous advantages in this information race, namely, language for many of the islands and an excellent telecommunications infrastructure. The challenge for the region will continue to be how to use these and other advantages to guarantee economic success. <<

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Abstracts of Selected ECLAC/CDCC Publications Produced in 1999

Programme for science and technology management in the Caribbean

LC/CAR/G.571; CCST/99/4 - 35 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

Defines the nature and scope of science and technology and examines the status of both in the Caribbean context. The role of science and technology in realising the vision of a Caribbean where people had their basic needs satisfied is outlined and several issues identified among them: climate change and sea level rise; natural and environmental disasters; waste management; coastal and marine resources. Proposals are identified to cover programmes not currently being undertaken. Proposed programme areas include: fisheries biology and management; mariculture and aquaculture; pollution control, ocean energy; freshwater resources; land resources; tourism resources; biodiversity resources; transport and communications; human resources development and information and computer technology.

Promotion and adoption of new technologies within the context of sustainable development

LC/CAR/G.570; CCST/99/3 - 14 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

This paper deals with the transfer and promotion of new technologies as a means of achieving sustainable development. Endogenous technological capability in the agriculture, tourism and industrial sectors are examined as well. The relationship between culture and technology is also explored.

Economic profiles of Caribbean countries

LC/CAR/G.572 - 69 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999 : tbls.

This document presents economic profiles of the following Caribbean countries: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Haiti, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, United States Virgin Islands. The information is arranged in the following sections: Basic facts; background; selected economic indicators; economic activity; fiscal operations; external debt; and balance of payments.

Fiscal covenant: strengths, weaknesses, challenges - Caribbean perspectives





LC/CAR/G.564 - 130 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999 : tbls.

Papers in this publication deal with the experiences of selected Caribbean countries in the area of fiscal management and fiscal reform. Focus is also placed on the subregional perspective with regards to fiscal management and reforms.

Report of the second Caribbean subregional teleconference of the Board of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

LC/CAR/G.559 - 6 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

Caribbean Subregional Teleconference of the Board of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2, 19 February 1999. Substantive issues on the agenda of this meeting were:

-  A report on the 27th meeting of presiding officers;
-  The upcoming 28th meeting of presiding officers;
-  The 8th session of the Regional Conference; and
-  A mid-term review of the Beijing Conference, in particular, the Caribbean subregional preparatory process.

Report on the state of implementation in the Caribbean of the programme of action for Small Island developing states

LC/CAR/G.569 - 13 p. Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

Meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development, 7, New York, 19-30 April 1999. Notes that the greatest concerns with respect to the implementation of the SIDS programme of action have articulated by reference to such priority areas as "coastal and marine resources", "natural and environmental disasters" and "tourism". Notes two success stories, namely, climate change and sea-level rise and national institution and administrative capacity. Notes the financial, institutional, human resource and training constraints encountered during the implementation process. Identifies the priorities of SIDS for the next five years. Priority areas include land resources; waste management; climate change; freshwater resources; tourism resources; biodiversity; science and technology.

Report of the ninth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)

LC/CAR/G.568 - 35 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC, 9, Port of Spain, 10-11 May 1999. Provides a list of participants. Notes some concerns arising from flagging attendance at CDCC meetings; the relevance of the work programme and the lack of sufficient coverage of Caribbean countries in ECLAC documents. Highlights plans to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the CDCC, including events planned. Discusses the implementation of the ECLAC/CDCC work programme for the biennium 1995 - 1999, as well as issues related to the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology and the status of regional implementation of Global Action Plans.

Report of the inter-agency collaborative group meeting preparatory to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development. Programme of action (WSSD/POA) and the meeting on the examination of ageing and the older person in the Caribbean

LC/CAR/G.560 - 14 p. Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1999

The report focuses on discussions undertaken with regard to a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the concept of ageing and older persons in the Caribbean sub-region. The objectives of the meeting were to ascertain, confirm and obligate resources and support for the two-day subregional meeting "Towards future action for social development in the Caribbean sub-region."

Globalization of financial markets: implications for the Caribbean

LC/CAR/G.562 - 32 p.
Port of Spain : ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Latin America and the Caribbean, 1999 : tbls.

The countries studied in this report are Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. The evolution and extent of financial globalization is examined and the macroeconomic policies of the countries in the study pertaining to trade, fiscal and monetary policy, and exchange rates are reviewed. The report also discusses the current financial crisis and its potential for disrupting or enhancing the positioning and economic welfare of the countries. It is recommended that countries pursue policies which guarantee macroeconomic stability and complement liberalization with prudent supervision of their financial sectors.

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