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ECLAC CDCC IN THE CARIBBEAN

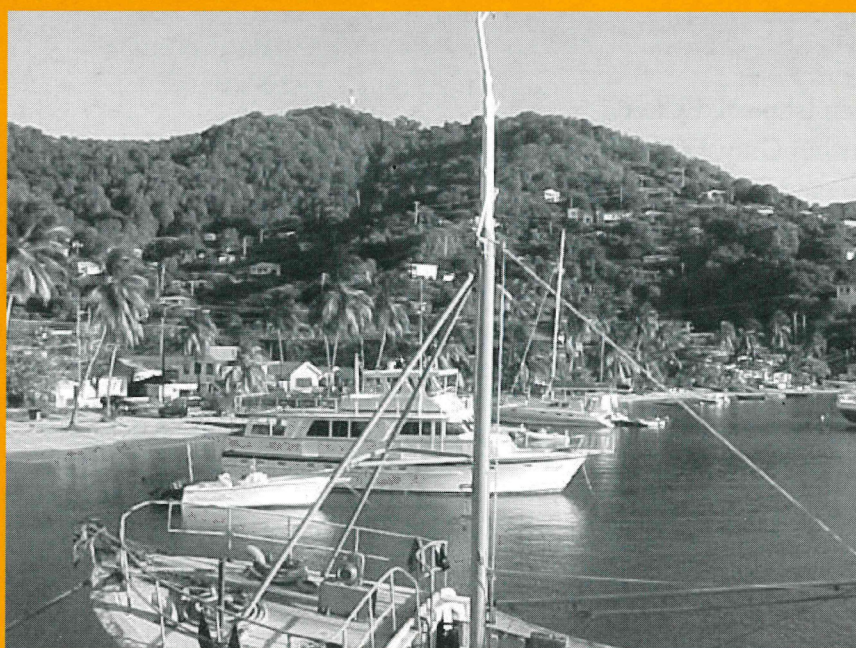
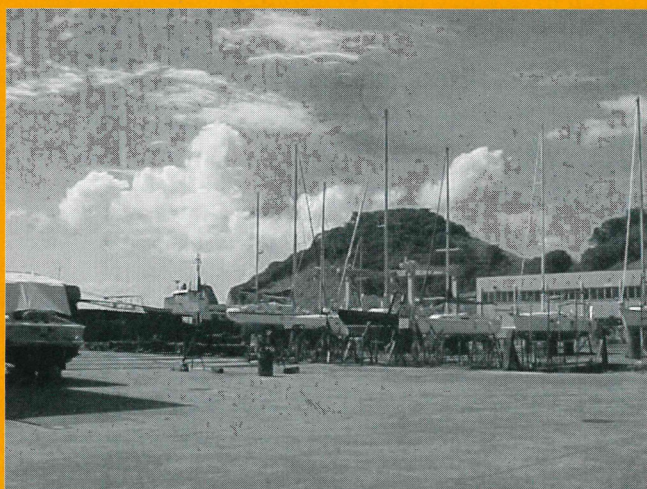
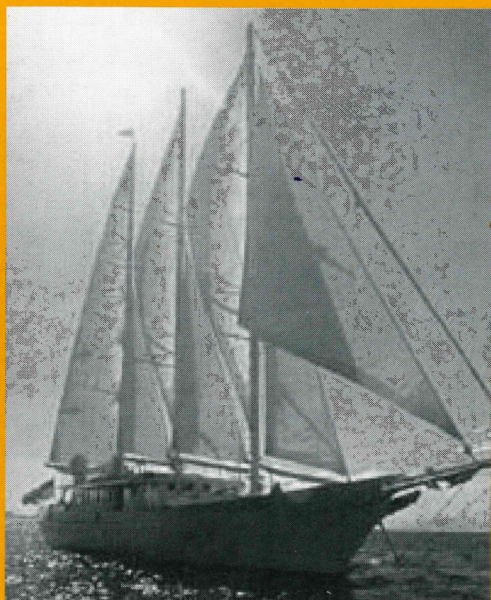


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CDCC

Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

In 1975, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) – then known as ECLA - established the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body at the governmental level. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean provides secretariat services to the CDCC.

The CDCC functions as an intergovernmental organization that meets annually at the technical level and every other year at the ministerial level. Its operational activities are carried out under the regular ECLAC work programme for the Caribbean, which includes economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, the environment, international trade and trade-in-service, information for development, statistics, small island developing States, science and technology, women in development, tourism, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

MEMBER COUNTRIES

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

ASSOCIATE MEMBER COUNTRIES

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

THE ROLE OF THE YACHTING SECTOR IN EASTERN CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT

Country studies commissioned by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean reveal that in some territories direct expenditure from within the yachting sector contributes more than cruise-ship tourism to national income. Nonetheless, officials and coordinating organizations continue to focus on ecological, cruise-ship and events-related tourism development to the almost complete exclusion of the yachting-for-pleasure industry. Indeed, even though this industry has grown from small, mostly family-owned operations in the 1960s to a multimillion-dollar concern in the 1980s and 1990s, its significance to host economies has not been officially recognised.

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean made these observations as she launched a meeting on the *Contribution of Yachting to Development in the Eastern Caribbean*, held at the ECLAC Port of Spain office from 12 to 13 December 2002. This meeting was the final component of a project that had been developed with the support of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and begun in 2000, to assess and make recommendations on the yachting sector in the Eastern Caribbean.

The core of the project was constituted in the country studies, which were conducted in Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands (BVI), Grenada, Martinique, Saint Lucia, St. Maarten, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. National consultations were then convened in four of these countries to discuss the main findings of the respective studies and to stimulate follow-up activity in support of the yachting sector. These consultations yielded significant developments. In Antigua, for example, the Marine Trades Association rebounded after the national consultation that was held on that island in May 2002.

Sailing enthusiasts as well as service providers and other professionals associated with the yachting sector (including customs and immigration officers, tourism officials and journalists) participated in the December 2002 meeting. The meeting was structured to supply data and analysis through presentations of country

study findings, followed by an overview of the subregional yachting sector. Participants then arranged themselves into five working groups, each of which addressed one of the following themes: institutional development; training and human resource development; research and data management; investment and marketing; and practices and standards for marinas and boatyards.

Yachting destinations compared

The studies revealed that the subregional yachting sector was largely private sector driven: tourism and other government officials were minimally involved in the development and management of the sector. Also evident, was the wide disparity among islands in the income derived from yachting - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines realised between US\$8 and 10 million annually, while, at the other end of the spectrum, the BVI showed a balance of payment inflow of US \$200 million in 2001. Also, each country had its own comparative advantage as a yachting destination. Accordingly, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was valued for the quality of its sailing waters, as was the BVI (which was also favoured for its marine infrastructure). Trinidad provided storage, repair and maintenance facilities, while St Maarten was known to supply the general services required by the yachting community. St Maarten's proximity to Anguilla and St Baarths added to its attractiveness, as did the physical location of Martinique, Saint Lucia and Grenada (because of their proximity to each other). A plethora of boat shows and other yacht tourism events distinguished yachting in Antigua and Barbuda.

At the same time, the yachting communities in all of these islands shared many characteristics. The annual yachting season lasted approximately six months during the earlier part of the year, usually coinciding with the cold winter period in northern countries; it then retreated into abeyance during the hurricane season. The yachting presence stimulated economic activity through visitor demand for maintenance and

(cont'd)

Participants at the subregional meeting on the Contribution of Yachting to Development in the Eastern Caribbean



(Photo courtesy Caribbean Compass)

Standing, left to right: John Shirley, The Moorings Ltd., Tortola, BVI; Andrew Richardson, St Lucia Sailing Club; Simon Welch, Marine Association of the BVI; Jack Dausend, Boaters Enterprise, Trinidad & Tobago; Kevin Gavin, St. Maarten Marine Trades Association; Winfield Griffith, Caribbean Tourism Organisation, Barbados; Tom van't Hof, ECLAC project consultant, Saba; Erik Blommestein, ECLAC Economic Affairs Officer; Andreas Wickham, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines; Cuthbert Didier, ECLAC project consultant, Saint Lucia; Joseph Renaud, Customs and Excise Division, Trinidad & Tobago; Robbie Ferron, ECLAC project consultant, St. Maarten; Sherry Ann Persad, Trinidad & Tobago Central Statistical Office; Brian de Fereire, Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad & Tobago; (partly hidden) Andrew McDonald, Ministry of Tourism, Antigua and Barbuda; Colin Barcant, Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago; Donald Stollmeyer, Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago; Vincent Hippolyte, Saint Lucia Air & Sea Ports Authority; Gideon Quow, Customs and Excise Department, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines; Ryan D'arcy, Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad & Tobago; Ivor Jackson, ECLAC project consultant, Antigua and Barbuda.

Seated, left to right: Antoinette Cozier-Simmons, Bequia Tourism Association; Laura Fletcher, Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada; Marie Kingston, Bequia Tourism Association; Lyndell Danzie-Black, Ministry of Tourism, Saint Lucia; Lima Frederick, Ministry of Tourism, Grenada; Dr. Len Ishmael, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean; Jacqueline Clarke, Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago.

Not shown: Ann Marie Martin, National Parks Authority, Antigua and Barbuda; Sally Erdle, Compass Publishing Ltd, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines; Elizabeth Stewart, Trinidad & Tobago Central Statistical Office.

repair facilities, banking and other personal services, food, entertainment and duty free shopping. Temporary workers (often migrants from other islands) would remain in any given anchorage for the duration of the active season and then move on to another sector (and other countries) in search of continued employment.

In her regional overview, the Director further commented on the instability and stagnancy of the yachting sector's human resource structure. She noted, for example, that the liberal work permit system in St Maarten allowed many foreigners to find employment there, but at the expense of the local skills pool, which

remained underdeveloped. Since the work permit structure in other islands was more restrictive, however, there were still many Caribbean workers, such as those from Antigua and Barbuda, who were forced to find employment outside the Caribbean during the low season. She proposed that the private and government sectors work together to resolve these contradictions.

Openness and collaboration would also facilitate the sharing of the best practice strategies that had been developed by individual islands. Examples of such practices included the maintenance of marine task force and marine police systems in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; the mechanisms developed in Antigua and Barbuda for more effective private-public sector collaboration; and the strong relationship that was being forged between the Tourism Ministry in Saint Lucia and that country's yachting sector. Through the recommended collaboration, particularly at the regional level, strategies might also be identified for improvements in such areas as worker health and safety, employee training, data availability, insurance coverage and institutional strengthening.

Developing a regional strategy

Coming out of the working group discussions was the call for a regional body (proposed as the Marina Association of the Caribbean – MAC) that would represent the interests of the yachting sector and coordinate its development. The institutional development group focused on the structural and policy work required for the establishment of such an organization, and identified some potential functions as lobbying for more efficient customs and immigration procedures, and the implementation of tighter safety and security measures. These could help to maintain the Caribbean's marketing niche as one of the safest yachting destinations in the world.

Promotion and image building was addressed also by the training and human resource development group,

which discussed approaches to popularise yachting among potential employees. Among the proposed strategies were the inclusion of swimming and yachting in school curricula, and its promotion as a leisure activity among young people; greater community outreach by national marine associations; and aggressive marketing designed to counter negative, exclusionary perceptions of the yachting sector and promote more widespread participation in marine activities. Those who had already chosen to work in the sector might benefit from specialised training and skill strengthening programmes, which could be developed by MAC.

Recommended yachting industry practices and standards provided guidelines on such matters as the proper treatment of both sewage waste and fuel spillages, the promotion and protection of occupational health and safety, and appropriate anchoring procedures. To monitor the implementation of these practices and standards, MAC could develop a system for rating marinas and boatyards. Other working group

recommendations also called for the establishment of universal definitions and the creation of data collection systems that would serve the information needs of such groups as government planners, regional and international institutions and researchers.

These proposals are to form the basis of a regional strategy through which the yachting community, in collaboration with related industries and government officials from throughout the Eastern Caribbean, might further develop the regional yachting sector. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean has agreed to support this process by helping to identify resources for the establishment of MAC, and providing technical and research expertise as required.



NATURAL DISASTER ASSESSMENTS AND TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean continues its programme of support to CDCC member States in assessing the consequences of natural disasters, when such assistance is requested. Following these assessments, a multidisciplinary team conducts training workshops - within the respective countries - in the use of the ECLAC methodology to assess the macroeconomic and social effects of natural disasters.

This process began in July 2000, with the convening of a training workshop in Port of Spain, in which representatives from 13 CDCC member countries and two subregional organizations were introduced to the natural disaster assessment methodology. The subregional workshop was followed by the first national training session, in the British Virgin Islands (BVI), later that month. The next national training workshop was convened in Belize in June 2001.

Subsequently, in response to the growing demand by CDCC member countries for technical assistance in the face of natural disasters, a Disaster Assessment Training Manual for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was developed in 2002.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat produced this manual to serve as a working document for the training workshops, and also as a reference tool for ongoing use. In order to address countries' individual needs in natural disaster assessment and management, a specialised manual has been produced for each of the workshops held this year.

The first of these was convened in Jamaica over the period 23 to 25 April 2002. More than 40 senior technocrats, drawn from a wide cross-section of the public and private sectors, were trained in the use of the manual that had been developed for use in Jamaica. The

next workshop, which trained a similar group in Saint Lucia, was held from 17 to 19 December 2002. Training was delivered by a special team comprising ECLAC/CDCC secretariat staff members as well as expert consultants, and focused on the use of the ECLAC Methodology for the Conduct of Post-disaster Macroeconomic, Social and Environmental Assessment.

The following is taken from the text of the opening statement delivered to the Training Workshop in Saint Lucia by the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Len Ishmael.

"It is with real pleasure that I open this Training Workshop here in Saint Lucia as you embark on this exercise geared to providing the skills and the methodology needed to undertake the macro-assessments of the economic, social and environmental costs of damages in the immediate aftermath of natural disasters.

Natural disasters can have enormously traumatic impacts on small societies. Each year, for example, the hurricane season conspires to effect major damage to productive and social sectors, as well as to

the infrastructure and natural resources of these islands with alarming frequency. Names such as Hattie, Andrew, Allen, Gilbert, David, Hugo, Luis, Marilyn, Michelle, Georges, Lenny and Keith will continue to haunt our collective consciousness for some time to come.

While a tremendous amount of the damages incurred in recent years has been coastal in nature, an increasing component has been the result of inland flooding as destabilised watersheds, mangrove destruction and increasing urbanisation decrease the natural ability of



the land to reduce rates of runoff, and carry fresh water safely out to sea.

The timing of this Workshop, at the end of the hurricane season for this year, is intended to enhance its utility with preparations for the next season, even as we cherish the hope, that this year we will be spared the ravages of the kind that have been experienced by this region in the past.

Across the world, the last two years of the twentieth century saw unusually high losses caused by natural disasters. In the 1990s, natural disasters killed an average of 140,000 people a year. Cost to the global economy may exceed over US\$50 billion a year. In the wider Caribbean, most costly in human and economic terms were the horrendous effects of Hurricane Mitch in the Northern Caribbean and Central American States, and the devastation of Venezuela's Caribbean coastal communities, both coming within the latter part of the last century.

In keeping with trends in the rest of the world, it appears that damages due to natural disasters in the Caribbean are increasing. The years from 1995 to 1999 were the most active consecutive years of hurricane activity on record, following a period of below-average activity from 1970 to 1994. The year 1999 saw 12 tropical cyclones, including eight hurricanes, of which five reached category four on the Saffir-Simpson scale. This is the highest number of category four hurricanes in any one season, since record keeping began in 1886.

In the insular Caribbean, the worst affected areas were the Bahamas, which was hit by hurricanes Dennis and Floyd and by tropical storm Harvey, and the Eastern Caribbean which suffered from hurricanes José and Lenny, the latter compounding trackers by moving from west to east and exacting tremendous damage on the west coasts of most of the Windward and Leeward Islands, some of which were at least 500-600 miles away. Hurricanes Hugo, David and Allan, of course, will remain in the collective memory of persons from the Eastern Caribbean for some time to come.

As noted before, hurricanes are not, however, the only natural disaster to affect the region. Within the CARICOM group, we are all too familiar with the devastation wrought by the volcanic eruptions in Montserrat. In the aftermath of the massive dislocation wrought by the eruption of the Soufriere Hills, the population plummeted from about 11,500 in 1995 to less than 3000, three years later, as 64% of the island was destroyed. The effects of the Montserrat volcanic eruption resulted in a collapse of the Montserrat economy and society, where already constrained growth rates collapsed to minus 7.6 and minus 21.4 % in 1995 and 1996.

While perhaps not as dramatic, the impact of a hurricane on an island economy is attested to by significant drops in growth of GDP. For example Jamaica's GDP fell from 7.7% to 2.9% following Gilbert in 1988; Saint Lucia's GDP fell from 2.9 to - 0.5% following Debbie in 1994 and Dominica experienced a drop from 7.7% to 2.4% after Luis/Marilyn in 1996.

*In the small island developing States
of the Caribbean, economic
vulnerability sits in an uncomfortable
alliance with the twin spectre
of social and ecological vulnerability.*

A single hurricane has the capacity to wipe out the gains of productive sectors by 20 years. More to the point, islands like Antigua and Barbuda which have suffered direct hits by some nine hurricanes and storms in the last

10 years, find themselves in a constant state of rebuilding, taxing resources which could otherwise be devoted to productive enterprise.

While the tendency has been to focus on the economic aspects of these damages, the sheer dislocation to people's lives and resulting societal impacts are at least as important in every aspect. This fact of life - that these islands are located in a geographic reality that dictates the consistent onslaught of storms, compounds the other vulnerability: "economic" - well known for its association with small island developing States. Economic vulnerability thus sits in an uncomfortable alliance with the twin spectre of social and ecological vulnerability - against which these countries have very little defence.

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While total defence is an unreal expectation, it has long been recognised that the ravages caused by these almost annual visitations, as regular as they are unwelcome, can be mitigated to the extent to which we in this region are increasingly prepared for their visits. Reconstruction must now be married with attempts to reduce vulnerability over the long term and all new development should incorporate the sort of measures, including locational choices that give them the best chance to survive the onslaught of the worst storms.

Increasingly sophisticated technology now means that the lead-time for preparation prior to the advent of these storms has grown longer. However, some storms develop with an intensity and urgency all of their own. Hurricane Keith, in October 2000, developed from a tropical storm to category four hurricane in less than 24 hours, precluding the ability for a full scale evacuation of the off shore Cays in Belize.

However, strides in the use of land use and physical planning techniques and standards, the formulation of building codes, the introduction into the islands of specialist skills such as coastal engineering and coastal zone management, the development of new legislation and the establishment of authorities to monitor development and steer new development away from most hazardous areas - even the sheer experience gathered as a result of such storms by the population at large - all combine to assist this region in the ability to contain some of the impacts of these storms.

Indeed, across the countryside in Antigua, for example, most, if not all homes, including the smallest, now have hurricane shutters. Public education and awareness, disaster preparedness, policy and other instruments geared at mitigation are all critical in this regard.

No less important to the recovery process is the need for countries to understand the short, medium and long-term impacts of natural disasters on macroeconomic performance and the well-being of their populations. This is the centrepiece of the methodology to which you will be introduced over the next two days.

Of particular relevance to the Training Workshop that is now being inaugurated, is the post-disaster assistance that ECLAC has provided to several countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region, including Belize in the aftermath of hurricane Keith in November 2000, and Jamaica after hurricane Michelle in November 2001, using the methodology that it has developed and used over the last three decades to assess the macro-economic impacts of damages occasioned by natural disasters on economic performance, over the short, medium and long term. Apart from its most recent application in this region in Jamaica earlier this year, the methodology has most recently been used to assist the countries of Central

America in the aftermath of Mitch; Venezuela after the devastating landslides of last year; St. Maarten in the wake of Hurricane Luis; St Kitts and Nevis, in the wake of Georges; Anguilla in the aftermath of Luis and more recently Lenny;

and El Salvador in the wake of several back-to-back earthquakes.

While other groups are involved in the quantification of damages so as to deal with emergency responses, the ECLAC methodology is unique in that it assesses the sum total of all damages, direct and indirect, on the overall macro economic performance of the country; its effects on government revenues, on GDP and so on, in the short, medium and long term. It is truly unique in its overall objective.

In the aftermath of a natural disaster, member States make a direct request to ECLAC for assistance in undertaking this type of assessment. In the case of Belize, for example, this was effected via official correspondence from the Prime Minister to the Director of the ECLAC Caribbean Headquarters, in response to a request by the IDB that this be done, prior to their approval of a recovery package. Within two weeks, a team was assembled in country. Less than three weeks later, our official report had been submitted to Cabinet, and the team had made presentations to the IDB and a gathering of fifty donors at the Bank's headquarters in Washington DC, on behalf of the Belizean government.

While we were in that instance able to deploy our team with remarkable speed, we are, however, concerned by

Countries need to understand the short, medium and long-term impacts of natural disasters on macroeconomic performance and the well-being of their populations.

the fact that it is not possible to deploy assessment teams to all countries affected by the same phenomena, simultaneously, due to the resources involved and other capacity constraints. In view of this, I have considered it of the utmost importance that we develop post-disaster assessment capacity at the national level so that an understanding of the overall impact of the disaster on the social and economic wellbeing of a country can get started even before help arrives from the outside. To date, the team has trained 60 persons in the use of the methodology in Belize, 45 in Jamaica, 25 in the BVI, and 23 at a regional workshop two years ago. The training received by the Belizeans for example was instrumental in their ability to utilize the methodology in

constraints that are characteristic of the smaller countries within this region. Both the reformulation of the methodology to incorporate the special structures of SIDS, and the development of training materials are initiatives emanating from the ECLAC Caribbean Headquarters.

One of the tools that this methodology will provide is a consistent methodology and framework for the collection, aggregation and assessment of data across all sectors, which once in place will greatly aid in efforts aimed at the analysis of the event and projections of both impacts and costs. But it remains important, once the workshop itself is completed, that Saint Lucia ensures



formulating their own assessment in the aftermath of Hurricane Michelle, which swung through Belize less than 5 months after training was complete.

A brief snapshot of the evolution of the ECLAC methodology may be helpful. The methodology was developed close to 30 years ago, from a perspective that has been informed by countries in South and Central America, rather larger, and in many ways different to those of the insular Caribbean. New technologies and the refinement of certain disciplines have created the perception of a need within ECLAC's Caribbean Headquarters, to refine the methodology to ensure that it is both in keeping with the broader definition and philosophy of development that obtains today, and to ensure that it incorporates those perspectives and variables which differentiate the insular Caribbean from that of its neighbours in Central and South America. As a result, the methodology has been refined to make provision for the peculiarities of the natural resource base, institutional and human resource capacity

that its team is ready to deploy at short notice, using its new tools to produce its own effective assessments. It is also therefore important to consider the training by those of you gathered here, of your counterparts who may be expected to channel data to you for aggregation and analysis after a disaster. Their use of different data collection protocols will make your own attempts at aggregation and analysis, that much more difficult. I would urge therefore that each unit represented here, share with their colleagues the protocols that we will discuss and use over the next three days, to ensure maximum utility and benefit from this exposure.

With these various caveats in mind, I look forward to the next three days. It is the hope of myself and my colleagues, however unrealistic it may be, that for all of us the opportunities to operationalize the skills and methodology to which I speak, will be few and far between, but that, if and when the time comes, we will all be suitably prepared."



LIST OF ECLAC/CDCC PUBLICATIONS: JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2002

Catalog Number	Title	Publication Date
LC/CAR/G.683	Global Economic Developments – 2000-2001	02/01/02
LC/CAR/G.684	Report on the ad hoc expert panel for the development of a methodological approach for the construction of the SVI	15/02/02
LC/CAR/G.685	Provisional agenda – 19th session of the CDCC	13/03/02
LC/CAR/G.685 ADD.1	Provisional annotated agenda – 19th session of the CDCC	13/03/02
LC/CAR/G.686	Implementation of the ECLAC/CDCC work programme for the 2001-2002 biennium	12/03/02
LC/CAR/G.687	Proposed draft programme of work of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean Biennium 2004-2005	04/03/02
LC/CAR/G.688	Summaries of resolutions recently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council which may be of special interest to member countries of the CDCC	06/03/02
LC/CAR/G.689	Report of the Meeting of the Caribbean Planners Network	25/03/02
LC/CAR/G.690	Disaster Assessment Training Manual for SIDS, Jamaica, 23-25 April 2002	17/04/02
LC/CAR/G.691	Data collection system for domestic violence	23/04/02
LC/CAR/G.692	Report of the 19th session of the CDCC	25/04/02
LC/CAR/G.693	Incorporation of special and differential treatment in international trade agreements and the implications for the Caribbean economies	18/05/02
LC/CAR/G.694	Intra-CDCC Trade and Investment	17/06/02
LC/CAR/G.692	Report of the 19th session of the CDCC	25/04/02
LC/CAR/G.693	Incorporation of special and differential treatment in international trade agreements and the implications for the Caribbean economies	18/05/02

Catalog Number	Title	Publication Date
LC/CAR/G.694	Intra-CDCC Trade and Investment	17/06/02
LC/CAR/G.695	Report of the Meeting of Caribbean Small Business Entrepreneurs, Organizations and Agencies	19/06/02
LC/CAR/G.696	The development of science and technology indicators in the Caribbean	28/06/02
LC/CAR/G.697	Overview of Caribbean economic performance	19/07/02
LC/CAR/G.698	Jamaica – Macro-socio-economic assessment of the damage	22/07/02
LC/CAR/G.699	Notes on the economic perspective for the Caribbean subregion	19/08/02
LC/CAR/G.700	Report of the Meeting on the Development of the Services Sector in the Caribbean	30/09/02
LC/CAR/G.701	The production of statistical data and information in the Caribbean	02/10/02
LC/CAR/G.702	Report of the ad hoc expert group meeting on the development of social statistical databases and a methodological approach for a social vulnerability index for small island developing states	22/10/02
LC/CAR/G.703	SSI of Caribbean countries, Vol. XV, 2002	08/11/02
LC/CAR/G.704	Antigua and Barbuda – The yachting sector	01/11/02
LC/CAR/G.705	Report of the subregional seminar on the trade statistics database, Port of Spain	18/11/02
LC/CAR/G.706	Saint Lucia – The yachting sector	06/11/02
LC/CAR/G.707	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – The yachting sector	08/11/02
LC/CAR/G.708	St. Maarten – The yachting sector	23/11/02
LC/CAR/G.709	ECLAC/CDCC Disaster Assessment Training Manual for SIDS	12/12/02
LC/CAR/G.710	Martinique – The yachting sector	20/11/02
LC/CAR/G.711	Trinidad and Tobago The yachting sector	09/12/02
LC/CAR/G.712	Report on the subregional seminar on the trade statistical database, Antigua and Barbuda	02/12/02
LC/CAR/G.713	Report of the subregional seminar on the trade statistics database, Jamaica	30/12/02

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TRADE STATISTICS DATABASE PROJECT

By September of 2002, the project called "Support to the Development of Trade in the Caribbean" (NET/00/081) had created databases for some participating countries and was ready to continue the process of consultation with the suppliers and some of the users of the data. Accordingly, the project team convened three subregional seminars to showcase the work done to date on the database; and to elicit from the invited guests their thoughts on its design and their recommendations for its enhancement. These contributions were stimulated by a discussion of the successes and challenges that the project team had faced in the process of developing the database.

At the seminars, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented an overview of the project and its accomplishments, tracing its evolution. Presenters also showcased the trade statistics database which, though not complete in terms of the number of countries, proved to be functional. By the fourth quarter of 2002, the database had increased in size to a point where it could satisfy - to a great extent - requests from users.

Database design

The database was designed for access on the World Wide Web. It utilized the REDATAM software that had been originally developed by the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) for compiling and analysing population data. This software package was developed by CELADE for processing demographic data such as those yielded by censuses and large surveys. Its design facilitated its use for other types of data that were hierarchical in structure. Its use as the engine behind the trade statistics database was the first non-demographics use to which it was put. For this the office drew on the resources of CELADE and the member of its staff who had been assigned to the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean office at the time of design of the database. The

demonstrated use of that software made it an ideal choice for remote database accessibility since its table building capability would add value to queries, yielding exactly what the remote user would like to have by way of output.

The participants recommended that training in the use of the database engine should be made more widely available to statisticians in order to provide a measure of technical support for the database and thus ensure its sustainability over time.

At the Seminars a demonstration of the query routine on a web page underscored the speed of the query and the utility of the database to remote users. The

The project consultant noted that countries needed to provide clear documentation of record layout.

secretariat observed that apart from answering queries on trade flows, two analysis packages served to inspire the inclusion of indicators that could be used to perform more in-

depth analysis of the trade statistics.

Seminar participants also learned that the volume and value index numbers that the project team had produced had been subjected to wide fluctuations in average unit values. Presenters explained that part of the fluctuation could be explained by the nature of the unit of measurement, which was not necessarily a good correlate of average unit value. In part, average unit value was a function of the country of origin, the economics of transport over varying distances and quality. Participants agreed that the index could not be an accurate measurement but that it had utility as a broad indicator of the movement in average unit value or volume. The Seminars recommended that the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean should research the feasibility of preparing index numbers on the basis of country of origin or destination, or using some other criteria.

Project report

The consultant to the project presented a report on the work that he had undertaken. His first task was to establish the ability of the countries to provide trade data in the detail and format required by the project. His findings revealed a diversity of abilities to deliver the data in required format as well as a diversity of the nomenclatures that were being used, although almost all of the countries used the Harmonised System (HS). He observed the need for countries' Customs Departments to collect accurate data on every aspect of their respective Customs Warrants and not only on the establish the ability of the countries to provide trade data in the detail and format required by the project. His findings revealed a diversity of abilities to deliver the data in required format as well as a diversity of the nomenclatures that were being used, although almost all of the countries used the Harmonised System (HS). He observed the need for countries' Customs Departments to collect accurate data on every aspect of their respective Customs Warrants and not only on the items that determined duty payable. Also reported, were the challenges to the successful construction of the databases, which included:

1. The many unsuitable formats that were used for supplying data to ECLAC. The dBASE IV format only should be used.
2. The poor documentation of record layout that accompanied the files. Countries needed to provide clear documentation of record layout.

These two challenges were under the control of the supplying countries and could be overcome by corrective action at country level. The seminars recommended short seminars to trade statistics personnel to address and solve the problem of inaccurate data.

An extremely useful addition to the database would be an analytic module that could add value to the research to be performed on the data in the database. The MAGIC (Module for the Analysis of Growth in International Commerce) and CAN (Competitive Analysis of Nations) modules, which had been developed within the ECLAC system, were presented

to participants at the seminars. These were well received and much enthusiasm expressed for more training in the packages so that countries, through their trade negotiators, could gain more insight into the performance of their imports and exports.

The study entitled "The Netherlands Antilles: Trade and Integration with CARICOM" formed part of the deliverables of the project. Findings of this study were also presented to the seminars by the secretariat though this research had been completed before the database was constructed. The wealth of data collected subsequent to the study was therefore not available to the consultant who worked on it.

At the end of each session, seminar participants had the opportunity to evaluate their experience. An analysis of their gradings and their suggestions for future work in trade statistics is presented on page 14.



TRADE DATABASE SEMINARS-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES: SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

Question 1.

How do you evaluate the quality of the presentation of the background to the project?

Response	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adequate	3.3	3.3
Satisfactory	6.7	10.0
Good	26.7	33.3
Excellent	66.7	100.0

Question 2.

How do you evaluate the quality of the presentation of the work done by the Consultant?

Response	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adequate	-	-
Satisfactory	6.7	6.7
Good	26.7	33.3
Excellent	66.7	100.0

Question 3.

How do you evaluate the quality of the presentation of CAN and MAGIC?

Response	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adequate	3.3	3.3
Satisfactory	6.7	10.0
Good	40.0	50.0
Excellent	50.0	100.0

Question 4.

Indicate your evaluation of the desirability of accomplishing more work in trade statistics and analysis through future funded activity.

Response	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not desirable	-	-
Perhaps	6.7	6.7
Desirable	26.7	33.3
Very desirable	66.7	100.0

Question 5.

Five most recommended aspects of work to be done regarding the project

Recommendations in descending order of general preference
Training in CAN and MAGIC
Training in REDATAM engine
Improvement in quality of data coming from Customs Department
Volume and Value Index numbers
Database on Trade in Services

Question 6.

Would you be willing to participate in a workshop on Trade Index number concept and design?

Response	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	-	-
Yes	83.3	83.3
Don't know	16.7	100.0

COLLABORATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean continues to foster collaboration among and between institutions and agencies in the subregion. In the area of science and technology, much is accomplished in association with those regional bodies that are working in these and related fields.

In 2002, specific collaborative projects were undertaken with the following agencies, organisations and institutions:

1. The European Union - The promotion of small and medium enterprise development in the Caribbean

Following discussions at the national level, it was agreed that the establishment of a subregional network of SMEs (and agencies with responsibility for SME development) could further the development of that sector. Such a network would better facilitate the sharing of information among SMEs and their supporting agencies. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, through its Science and Technology Unit, convened a meeting in Saint Lucia over the period 3 to 5 April 2002, to bring the relevant groups together, develop plans for the network and begin the process of information sharing. The European Union and ECLAC jointly funded this meeting.

2. The Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Inter-American Bank (IADB) and the Global Water Partnership - The formation of a Caribbean Water Partnership (CWP) Programme

A core group comprising persons from agencies with responsibility for water resources management in the subregion has been formed to undertake preparatory work for the launching of a Caribbean Water Partnership (CWP). The ECLAC/CDCC Science and Technology Unit has assisted in developing a programme of work that will address information dissemination and research issues. It has also been

necessary to identify prospective collaborators and as well as possible donors for the implementation of such a work programme. The core group meets frequently and is working towards a CWP launch in April 2003. The objective of this collaboration is to continue to promote an integrated approach to water resources management, in accordance with the recommendations agreed to at the meeting on Integrated Water Resource Management: Institutional and Policy Reform, which was held in 1997.

3. Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI); University of the West Indies (UWI); Global Environment Change and Food Systems (GECAFS)

The ECLAC/CDCC Science and Technology Unit collaborated with CARDI, UWI and GECAFS to co-host a subregional meeting in Trinidad (19 to 20 September 2002); the primary objective of the meeting was the development of a research agenda that focussed on Caribbean global climate change and food systems. The senior policy-makers and technical officers of the region who attended the meeting were encouraged to include global climate change considerations in their long-term policy recommendations. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat contributed to a paper on Caribbean food systems and is now part of a core group formed to finalise the research agenda and identify funding for its implementation.



ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2002, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat) continued to provide research and technical assistance support to the 16 full and 7 associate member countries of the CDCC. What follows is a review of some of the secretariat's work over the past year.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Unit continued its work in the economic and social impact of globalisation, financing for development, and trade and investment issue areas. Technical assistance in economic and trade-related areas was also made available to member States through both planned work programme activities and ad hoc assignments.

The Unit's output included a document on trade in services, which highlighted that sector's contribution to subregional economic growth and member States' foreign exchange earnings. This document was used as the background paper for the meeting of experts that was held in September to further explore the role of the services sector in Caribbean development.

Among the wider trade and financial issue areas addressed, were trends in foreign direct investment flows to, and their impact upon, CDCC countries; as well as the incorporation of special and differential treatment in international trade agreements and the implications for Caribbean economies. Research was also begun on the effects of globalisation on economies in the subregion; structural and policy issues in the transition towards an information society; and exchange rate regimes in the Caribbean.

Social Affairs

A major aspect of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat's work programme for 2002 was the development of a social statistical database, in response to the articulated needs of governments in the subregion. To date, 49 persons from 20 member countries have been trained in evidence-based social policy formulation for the Caribbean.

Another important project completed this year, was a social audit of the sugar industry in St. Kitts and Nevis, which was conducted at the request of that country's government. The audit comprised surveys of sugar workers and the wider labour market, and produced recommendations for the development of social safety policies to protect retrenched labour. Also this year, as part of its technical assistance to the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court's "Family and Domestic Violence Legislative Reform" project, the Social Affairs Unit undertook an evaluation of the domestic violence legislation in five CDCC countries.

Other research areas addressed by the Social Affairs Unit included issues related to gender socialisation, violence and youth; the social vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS; equality and non-discrimination legislation in the Caribbean; and migration. To this end, an ad hoc expert group meeting on gender socialisation and violence was convened in December, while the development – and training in the use – of social statistical databases continued throughout 2002. Research into initiatives in Caribbean countries to end violence against women, as well as subregional labour migration trends was also started.

Science and Technology

Ongoing technical support to Caribbean governments continued in such areas as food security and climate change; preparatory work for the establishment of a Caribbean water partnership; and small and medium enterprise development. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat also assisted SEDNET, UWI by monitoring a Global Environmental Fund (GEF) funded programme on the status of civil society in the subregion and its contribution to the sustainable development agenda.

Research documents produced by this Unit included a report on the development of science and technology indicators and another that related to the adoption and application of information technology to scientific, technological and human resource development in the subregion. Production of the newsletter INFOBITS also continued this year.

Statistics

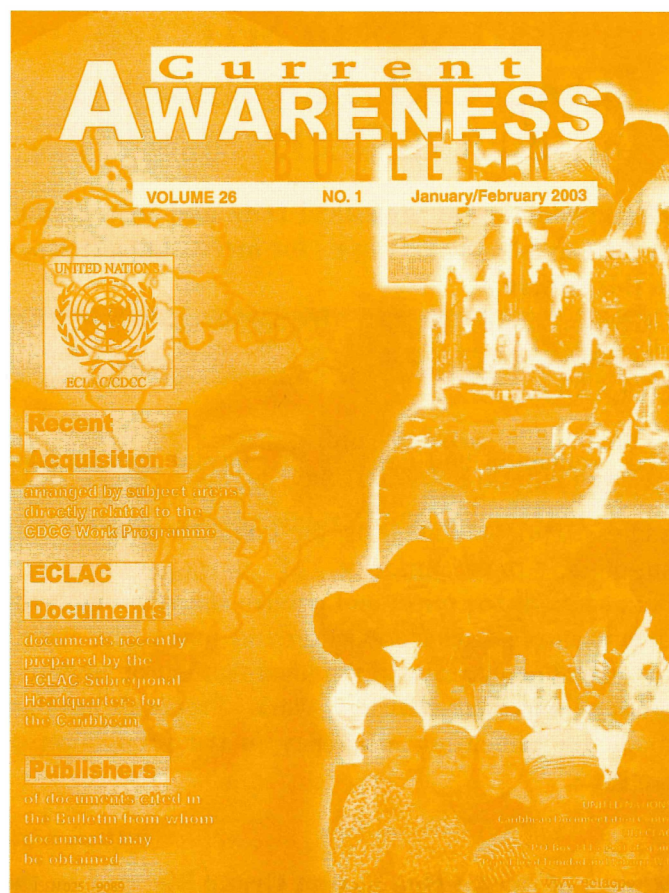
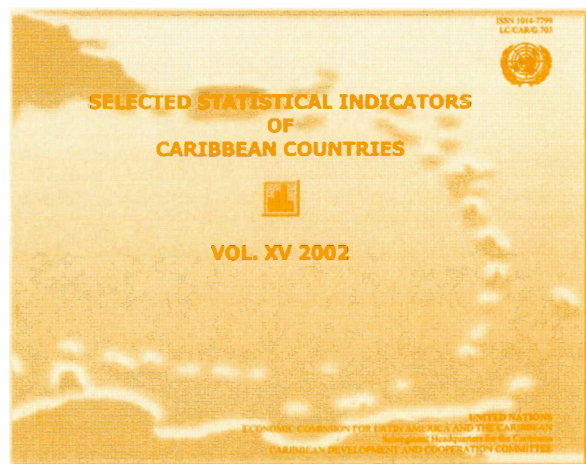
A fully searchable trade and transportation statistics database was established to provide Caribbean countries with reliable data in these areas and thereby support national policy development. Thus far, training has been provided to 51 statisticians from 17 CDCC member countries. Officers of both the Statistics and Economic Development Units collaborated in the database training workshops.

The fifteenth issue of the *Selected Statistical Indicators of the Caribbean* was produced by the Statistics Unit and published in November 2002. Also published this year, was a document on the production of statistical data and information in the subregion. It discusses the findings of a survey of data producers in Caribbean countries and includes proposals for increasing efficiency in this sphere.

Caribbean Documentation Centre

As the unit responsible for information-related issues, the Caribbean Documentation Centre (CDC) continued to supply data related to the work of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat through printed bulletins and newsletters, a virtual library and Web-based access to several of its bibliographic databases.

Six issues of the *Current Awareness Bulletin* were produced. Access to this publication - which provides national planners, policy makers, researchers and libraries with current information on regional development issues - was also made available through the Web site www.eclacpos.org. At the same time, up-to-date information on journals and other publications received by the CDC was supplied in the bimonthly newsletter *Current Contents*.



The CDC also continued to maintain the Caribbean Digital Library (CDL), which was designed as a collaborative venture among regional libraries and data specialists to make their holdings more widely available. The CDL received more than 6000 hits in the first four months of 2002, though the library contains just over 400 documents.

Sustainable Development

As the secretariat for the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS POA), the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean was in many ways central to subregional preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The document *Preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development* was therefore published to brief subregional agencies and governments on the background to WSSD and apprise them of the major issues that would be considered at the Summit.

(continued on page 18)

ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED ECLAC/CDCC PUBLICATIONS: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2002

The Production of Statistical Data and Information in the Caribbean: Proposals for increasing efficiency in this sphere

ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2002

LC/CAR/G.701

The production and delivery of relevant and accurate statistical data is the subject of this document. Issues addressed include assuring the confidentiality of data supplied; the authority of extra-governmental organizations to collect and publish statistical data; the organization of data collection and processing within individual countries; and the identification of emerging areas of important statistical work. Proposals are then made for increasing efficiency in the production of statistics.

Report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Social Statistical Databases and a Methodological Approach for a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for Small Island Developing States Project

ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2002

LC/CAR/G.702

This report gives an account of the expert group meeting held on 23 September 2002, at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean office in Port of Spain. This meeting was convened to apprise agency partners and other stakeholders of the progress of the project. The main agenda item was the status report on the project, during which representatives of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat gave a review of the project objectives and explained how these were being met through its two components, the creation of social statistical databases and the development of a methodological approach for creating a social vulnerability index. The meeting also discussed a provisional agenda for training in the use of the databases. Finally, an update on the construction of the SVI was provided.



(from page 17)

Also published this year, was the document *Promoting an Integrated Management Approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development*. This publication reviews the evolution of a proposal that is currently before the United Nations General Assembly for the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development.

Technical assistance in assessing the economic impact of natural disasters was provided through the development of a training manual for SIDS and the convening of national training workshops in Jamaica and Saint Lucia, through which a total of 90 persons received training. This series of training workshops is to continue in 2003.

Development Planning

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean continued its technical assistance programme of support to member countries in such areas as physical planning and sound environmental management.

A major focus in this area was a two-year project begun in 2000, which targeted the development of a marine-based tourism strategy for the subregion. This project focussed on the yachting sector in the Eastern Caribbean and identified several options for diversifying the economic productive structures in the subregion. In this instance, therefore, planning issues were related to the continued expansion of the yachting sector, primarily as an alternative to traditional tourism strategies.

Please go to www.eclacpos.org for more information on the material produced by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in 2002.





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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

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