



SLOW GROWTH

SLOW GROWTH FOR REGIONAL
ECONOMIES IN 2022

ECLAC'S NEW REPORTS

ECLAC EXAMINES THE ISSUES OF
INTEREST AFFECTING CARIBBEAN

REDATAM

WORKSHOP ON THE CREATION OF
MAPS TO DISPLAY CENSUS AND
SMALL AREA STATISTICS



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About us

Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers insights into the latest projects, publications, technical assistance missions and research carried out by ECLAC Caribbean. In addition to these, sneak previews are provided of the most salient upcoming events, alongside enriching follow-ups to previously covered issues. With a view to featuring a variety of facets of Caribbean life and lifestyle, The Hummingbird also zooms in on cultural activities and landmark occurrences through an eye-opening regional round-up.

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International Days

4 January

World Braille Day

24 January

International Day of Education

27 January

International Day of Commemoration
in Memory of the Victims of the
Holocaust

Upcoming Meetings

11 January

Participation of diverse non-
governmental actors in the VNR
process

26 January

Sixty-second meeting of the Presiding
Officers of the Regional Conference
on Women in Latin America and the
Caribbean

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Posted Feb 4

Take part in the Caribbean Youth Survey! The survey is available until 10 February 2022, in three different languages (English, French and Spanish): <https://forms.office.com/r/cVaFuKiqqa>



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**ECLAC Caribbean**
Posted Feb 2

We invite you to be a part of the preparatory process by participating in one of four Youth Dialogues in February, as well as, the Regional Youth Forum in March. All are welcome to be a part!



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**ECLAC Caribbean**
Posted Feb 2

There will be a series of four Caribbean Youth Dialogues in February, as well as a Regional Youth Forum in March.
Register here: <https://forms.office.com/r/6iakcemWrq>



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Slow growth for regional economies in 2022

Latin America and the Caribbean will see its pace of growth decelerate in 2022 to 2.1 per cent, after reaching 6.2 per cent on average last year, according to new projections released by ECLAC. This slowdown is outlined in the annual flagship report, entitled Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean 2021.

At a recent virtual conference from Mexico City, ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, said the report describes a pattern of significant asymmetries between developed, emerging and developing countries with regard to the capacity to implement fiscal, social, monetary, and health and vaccination policies for a sustainable recovery from the crisis unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report indicates that the region is facing a very complex 2022: uncertainty regarding the pandemic's ongoing evolution, a sharp deceleration in growth, continued low investment and productivity and a slow recovery in employment, the persistence of the social effects prompted by the crisis, reduced fiscal space, increased inflationary pressures and financial imbalances.

Bárcena stated that the expected slowdown in 2022, combined with

the problems of low investment and productivity, poverty and inequality, calls for growth and employment creation to be central elements of public policymaking, while at the same time addressing inflationary pressures.

The 2.1 per cent average growth anticipated for this year reflects great heterogeneity among countries and subregions: the Caribbean will grow 6.1 per cent (excluding Guyana) and Central America will grow 4.5 per cent, while South America will expand by 1.4 per cent. Meanwhile, in 2021, the region experienced higher-than-expected growth, averaging 6.2 per cent due to the low baseline established in 2020, to greater mobility and to a favorable external context.

According to the Preliminary Overview 2021, estimates point to advanced economies growing by 4.2 per cent in 2022, being the only ones to resume the growth trajectory foreseen before the pandemic over the course of this year. Emerging economies, meanwhile, are seen growing 5.1 per cent in 2022, but they will only resume the growth trajectory forecast before the pandemic in 2025.

In terms of the labour market, employment recovered at a slower than expected last year: 30 per cent

of the jobs lost in 2020 had not been recuperated by 2021. Furthermore, the inequality between men and women was accentuated, reflecting the larger care burden on women and less dynamism in the sectors in which female employment is concentrated, such as services.

In 2022, ECLAC projects an 11.5 per cent unemployment rate for women – slightly below the 11.8 per cent recorded in 2021, but still well above the 9.5 per cent existing before the pandemic in 2019 – while unemployment among men is forecast at 8.0 per cent this year, nearly identical to that of 2021 (8.1 per cent) yet far above the 6.8 per cent seen in 2019.

The report also addresses one of the most worrisome economic issues today at a regional and global level: the rise in the price of products and services. In 2021, inflationary pressures were observed in some countries, led by price increases in food and energy (inflation reached 7.1 per cent on average by November, excluding Argentina, Haiti, Suriname and Venezuela), and these pressures are expected to continue in 2022.

ECLAC underlines that inflation is a multicausal phenomenon, which implies that monetary authorities should continue utilizing the full range of instruments

(monetary, foreign exchange, and macroprudential) that they have, beyond the interest rate, to confront inflationary pressures without hindering the impetus for improving growth and employment,

The challenges foreseen in 2022 – including lower economic growth, the risks of higher interest rates, currency depreciations and the possible weakening of sovereign credit ratings – make fiscal policy management more complex. That is why a strategic vision for public spending is required that would link short-term demands with long-term investments and contribute to closing social gaps.

In addition, ECLAC recommends that fiscal space must be expanded by eliminating tax evasion (which amounts to US \$325 billion, or 6.1 per cent of regional GDP), consolidating income taxes on individuals and corporations, extending the scope of taxes on assets and property, establishing taxes on the digital economy, environmental levies and others related to public health problems, and progressively revising and updating royalties for the exploitation of non-renewable resources. ■





Photo: The heavily damaged National Palace of Haiti after the earthquake, courtesy Wikimedia Commons

UN marks anniversary of devastating 2010 Haiti earthquake

On 12 January 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, leaving its capital Port-au-Prince devastated. About 220,000 people were reportedly killed, among them, 102 United Nations staff who lost their lives when the building housing the mission there, known as MINUSTAH, collapsed.

Paying tribute to all the victims in early January, the UN in Haiti remembered not only the hundreds of thousands of Haitians who lost their lives 12 years ago, but also the many thousands more who sustained permanent injuries.

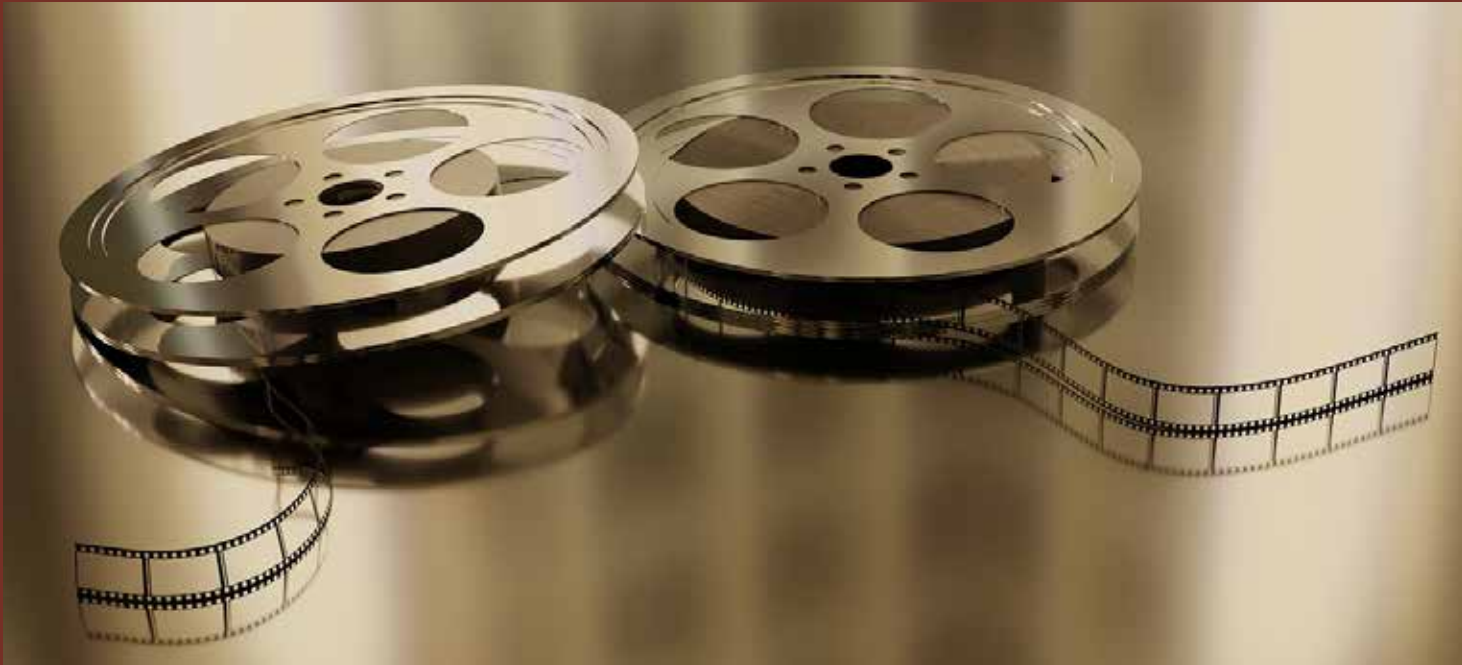
At the time, some 300,000 people were injured, and 1.5

million became homeless during the 35-second-long tremor. Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General in Haiti, Bruno Lemarquis, took part in a remembrance ceremony, for the lives lost. The UN system in Haiti honoured those staffers who perished, describing the incident as “one of the darkest days in its history”.

Since then, “Haiti has drawn on the resilience of its people, the work of its institutions and the assistance of its many friends and supporters to overcome the ravages caused by that calamity”. Across the UN system, messages of remembrance were shared. UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, said on a tweet that

“every day we remember the victims and honour their legacy through the Organization’s work”. And the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), renewed its support for Haiti’s “path to recovery, stability and prosperity”. Last August, another large earthquake hit the southern regions of the country, killing more than 2,200, injuring over 12,000 people, and leaving thousands of homes destroyed.

The same sense of resilience and solidarity was again in evidence, as the country promptly and effectively responded to yet another disaster. ■



The Caribbean's Premier Film Festival Is Back

The Caribbean's premier film festival has made its triumphant return to the island of Saint Barth. The well-known Saint Barth Film Festival, entitled "Cinéma Caraïbes" took place in May. It's the first time the event has been held since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

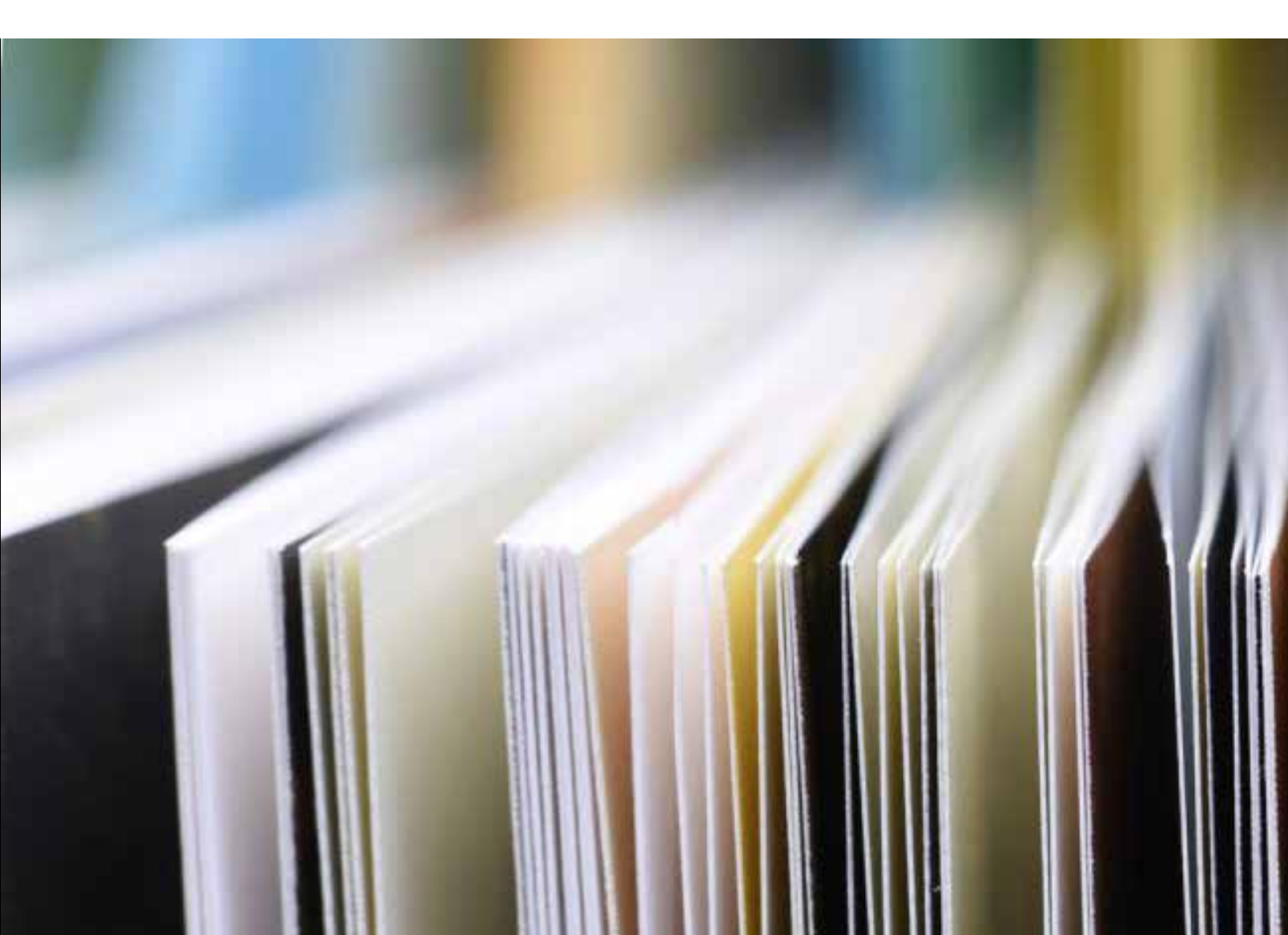
This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the event, which included four feature-length films on the program, and two documentaries.

The first two films were shown on 4th and 5th May, in the town of

Lorient, while the films on 6th and 7th May were shown on the main dock in Gustavia.

The event was created in 1996, with the goal of "presenting the rich cinematic art of the Caribbean to the population of the island." The success of the first festival encouraged its growth into an annual event, with the subsequent years of the festival confirmed the role of "Cinéma Caraïbes" as an important showcase for Caribbean cinema.

Now an established event on the island's cultural calendar, the festival has put Saint Barth on the map as a meeting place for regional and international filmmakers to come together to screen and discuss their work. One of the highlights of the festival was the Caribbean premier of the film, "Parlez-Vous Musique", by Alexander Bendahan, a documentary tracing the musical heritage of the island of Saint Barth. ■



ECLAC Caribbean
RELEASES TIMELY REPORTS



As a major think tank, ECLAC prepares regular reports and other publications, which examine the issues and areas of interest affecting Caribbean countries. These documents are based on research and careful analysis of available data, and in the case of studies/reports, the findings are discussed during expert group meetings (EGMs). Several such EGM reports were published in December 2021, and the Hummingbird takes this opportunity to share brief summaries of **three (3)** of them with readers, in the following articles.

[READ MORE](#)



ECLAC Caribbean releases timely reports

(1) Report of the expert group meeting on inclusive and equitable education during the COVID-19 pandemic

This report examined how the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lengthy periods of school closures, combined with remote learning challenges, disrupted the education of children.

An expert group meeting (EGM) was held virtually to discuss findings of the report, entitled, 'Education during the COVID-19 pandemic: access, inclusion and psychosocial support'. On opening the meeting, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, said the pandemic affected children's academic progress and future prospects, as well as their social and emotional development, their physical and mental health and overall well-being.

The report recognized that the pandemic had worsened pre-

existing educational inequalities. It described how the success of remote education was heavily dependent on the stability of the home environment, parental support, access to technological devices and Internet access, and therefore the educational playing field has been tilted towards children that have access to this support and infrastructure.

Children from socioeconomically disadvantaged households, therefore, were more likely to be affected by separation from their peers and from the supportive environment that school provides. Groups, such as children with disabilities, those of migrant or refugee status or from indigenous communities faced additional difficulties participating in remote learning, for example problems relating to technology or language.

The pandemic has also been stressful and challenging for teachers who have been working in difficult circumstances,

sometimes at risk to their own health.

Quarless emphasized the importance of assessing these impacts on the education system and learning from the many innovations which have helped to maintain continuity of education. She said the lessons learned during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic would help to build greater resilience into the Caribbean school system and could also contribute to building a post-pandemic education system for the achievement of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal, which is a more inclusive, equitable and high-quality education system.

The Hummingbird invites readers to have a look at this study, entitled 'Education during the COVID-19 pandemic: access, inclusion and psychosocial support'.



“ *...the study provided policy recommendations to support sustainable water resources management in the Caribbean SIDS.* ”

Artie Dubrie - Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit

(2) Report of the expert group meeting to review the study on integrated water resources management challenges in Caribbean small island developing States

Another expert group meeting (EGM) was convened by ECLAC Caribbean in late 2021, to review a study entitled, “Synthesis of policy interventions responding to common integrated water resources management (IWRM) challenges in the Caribbean small island developing States”.

During the meeting, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, commended participants from the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago for readily agreeing to participate in this important research.

She affirmed that the sustainable management of freshwater resources is important to economic, environmental, and social development. She noted that the current demands on public health management

imposed by COVID-19 have increased awareness of human interaction with economic and natural systems and the systemic nature of risk.

Quarless explained that the study addressed the challenges, explored best practices and optimum approaches to sustained water resources management in the Caribbean. She expressed the hope that the findings and recommendations can serve Member States in addressing sustainable water resources management through an IWRM framework.

In presenting the study, ECLAC Caribbean’s Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit (SDDU), Artie Dubrie, outlined the objectives and methodology applied to examine the status of implementation of selected elements of an IWRM framework. She said the study provided policy recommendations to support sustainable water resources management in the Caribbean SIDS, including recommendations for potable

water management approach in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dubrie stated that these recommendations can address IWRM implementation, and thereby support Member States in addressing the reporting requirements of the SDGs on this issue. She also suggested that water resources management should be incorporated into the curriculum of tertiary institutions in the Caribbean.

This study contains a section on IWRM data management and reporting requirements. Hummingbird readers and anyone interested can read it here: ‘Synthesis of policy interventions responding to common integrated water resources management (IWRM) challenges in the Caribbean small island developing States’.



ECLAC Caribbean releases timely reports (continued)

(3) Report on the status of institutional mechanisms for sustainable development planning in the Caribbean

ECLAC Caribbean's Deputy Director, Dillon Alleyne, chaired a virtual expert group meeting (EGM) in late 2021, which reviewed the study entitled, 'A review of the status of institutional mechanisms for sustainable development planning in the Caribbean'.

Alleyne said that the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted longstanding multidimensional vulnerabilities linked to poverty and inequality, and he emphasized the need for integrated planning approaches to address sustainable development.

He explained that the study provides an overview of integrated decision-making processes in Caribbean countries, and the role national institutions are playing in support of systemic integration for the implementation of the SDGs.

The research focuses on eight Caribbean small island developing

States (SIDS), namely Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Alleyne stated that the research team gathered information from these eight Caribbean countries, on the institutional infrastructures and coordination mechanisms implemented by the governments, and the needs identified in the process of implementation. The information was used to identify good practices, lessons learned and to shape recommendations. He added that the COVID-19 crisis has shone a spotlight on the need for resilience of our societies and institutions, which deal with increasingly complex development challenges in recent decades.

He said, "The Caribbean now has an opportunity to reset development trajectories for a resilient and green recovery – one with people, nature and climate at its core. There is a strong policy landscape to build on in the recovery process. Caribbean

SIDS now have a real opportunity to build forward stronger, using the experience gained in the pandemic response to reimagine their sustainable development frameworks. In our road towards 2030 it is important to strengthen resilience at all levels, seeking practical and peer learning and exchange to improve governance capacity to implement the SDGs and other global and regional commitments."

Presenting the study was ECLAC Caribbean's Social Affairs Officer, Catarina Camarinhas. She mentioned that achieving the 2030 Agenda requires a significant shift in planning approaches to include multidimensional and interdisciplinary action.

In the Caribbean context, resilience building efforts go hand in hand with climate action and disaster response priorities. Also important are investment in education and poverty reduction, as well as addressing longstanding social inequalities.

These responses, she explained, in the post-COVID context, are connected to regenerative models, providing solutions to multidimensional vulnerabilities, and to the ability to promote interdisciplinary action.

Camarinhas noted that collaborative action poses challenges to institutions which were not designed to act across boundaries. She said, "The aim is not to entirely solve these internal contradictions, but to manage them in order to implement the agendas."

The study states that policy coherence for sustainable development is an approach which aims to integrate economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions into all phases of policy through the involvement of all stakeholders. This effort has been addressed through various frameworks and concepts, such as systems-thinking, promoting horizontal and vertical integration.

Based on the study's provisional findings, Camarinhas stated that all the countries analysed have established or are in the process of establishing sustainable development frameworks, adopting the principles of multisector and inter-ministerial collaboration.

She stated that the study assesses how these different key elements of integration are being adopted at subregional level. She explained that it is not intended to be a comparison or assessment of countries' progress, but rather an analysis of the key trends in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean.

For persons interested in reading this study, please access it at this link: <https://bit.ly/3MR6nIX> ■



Photo: Carnival costume, courtesy Wikimedia Commons

Belize carnival back after two year pandemic break

After two very long years, Belize's Carnival is back as part of the country's September Celebrations! The announcement was made a few weeks ago, by Minister Francis Fonseca who is the chair of the National Celebrations Commission. This year's Belize's Carnival Road March will be celebrated under the theme "Carnival 2022! We outside! We back pon the road!"

"It's been two years since we've celebrated and played mas," commented the President of the Belize Carnival Association. "It gives me great pleasure and honor to announce the return of carnival. Since its inception in 1974, Carnival has been and will continue to be a highlight of the September Celebrations. As Belizeans, we all look forward to such a joyful occasion, whether we participate in mas or watch the spectacular performances."

"In 2019, the world was hit by a terrifying pandemic, forcing us to close our doors and adopt a new way of life. COVID 19 proposed mask wearing and social distancing. Major events, including our own carnival, were cancelled due to the inability to socialize." ■



Redatam⁷

Fast & Friendly

Workshop on the creation of maps to display census and small area statistics using REDATAM and QGIS

Population and housing censuses are the main source of official statistics for small areas, which are used for planning and resource allocation. Administrative sources can also provide geographically disaggregated information, although capacity constraints mean that administrative data are relatively underutilized in Caribbean statistical systems.

With geography being such an important dimension, maps have an important role to play in analysis and reporting of census and administrative statistics.

In this context, ECLAC Caribbean (in collaboration with the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE),

the Population Division of ECLAC), recently organized a virtual regional workshop on the creation of maps to display census and small area statistics, using REDATAM and QGIS.

REDATAM is a software programme developed and supported by ECLAC for the processing, analysis and dissemination of data from censuses and household surveys. The software makes it possible to provide public access, via the internet, to census and survey data sets in a way which permits much wider public access to data, but still protects the confidentiality of individual statistical records. It has been used primarily to disseminate population and housing censuses, but can also be used to provide

online access to living conditions, demographic and health, and other household surveys.

QGIS is GIS software which allows users to analyze and edit spatial information, to carry out spatial analysis and create maps. Statistical maps are created by combining spatial data with geocoded statistical data, where each data item is linked to a specific location or area. QGIS describes itself as a user-friendly, open-source Geographic Information Systems licensed under the GNU General Public License and is a volunteer driven project.

The REDATAM software, which is used by many Caribbean statistical offices for the online dissemination

of census data, has some basic mapping functionality but the QGIS software provides a comprehensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capability for statistical mapping in the form of free open-source software. For this reason, ECLAC is promoting the use of QGIS for spatial analysis and mapping alongside REDATAM.

The workshop provided training in the use of the REDATAM and QGIS software for the preparation of maps to display geographically disaggregated data. The training received enables census statisticians and GIS specialists to now, make greater use of maps in the analysis and reporting of data collected during the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, which was launched in the Caribbean in 2021.

It was attended by statisticians and technical staff of Caribbean statistical offices who process, analyze and report on census data or who work with Geographic Information Systems. Countries attending were the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Suriname, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Participants learned how to use REDATAM to process census data, which was then imported into QGIS so it could be displayed using maps. They learned how to create several different kinds of maps, such as proportional circle maps, maps with pie or bar charts and dot density maps. They also evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches. ■



Japanese ambassador inaugurates pumping station in Cuba

Japanese Ambassador to Cuba, Kenji Hirata, recently commissioned in that country, a pumping station for the supply of water by using renewable energy. It is a collaborative project financed by the Japanese government.

The diplomat was pleased that the project benefitted communities in the territory, with difficulties to access water and its objectives are to raise the standard of living of the population.

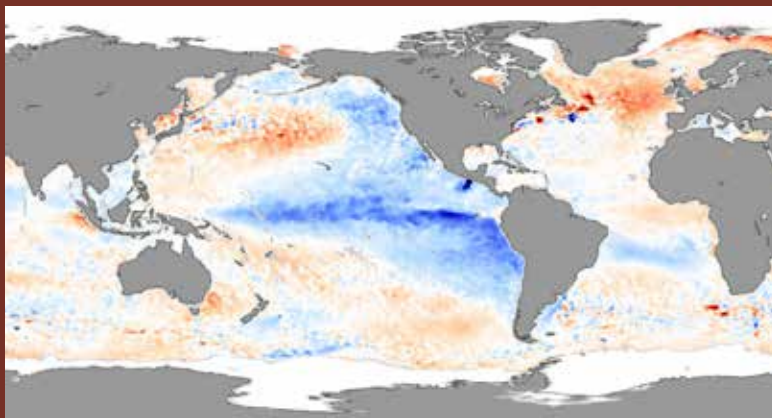
He showed his delight that Japan can favor six locations in this central province and reiterated the need to take care of this equipment to achieve long-term service.

The sixth and last pumping station to come into operation in the territory is installed in the rural community of the Elcire Perez Agricultural Production Cooperative, located in the municipality of Cabaiguán, where nearly 300 people will benefit.

José Luis Núñez, director of Maintenance and Equipment of the Provincial Aqueduct and Sewerage Company, explained that over 90 thousand euros were contributed for the six stations, and some 2,400 inhabitants of Fomento, Cabaiguán, La Sierpe and Sancti Spíritus will benefit.

Together with the use of photovoltaic solar energy, they represent savings of about 30,000 kilowatts/hour of energy per year, he said, adding that one of the impacts is that the population will receive safe quality water, together with the utility from renewable sources.

Inhabitants of the community were delighted with this collaboration and at the favorable change that resulted in their daily lives. ■



Region urged to brace for La Niña patterns during the next three months

The Barbados-based Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF) says a persistent La Niña pattern is expected to continue during the core dry season which should drive increasing dry spells across the northwest section of the region.

In its latest Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter, CariCOF said that for the period February to April the La Niña pattern will continue in addition to Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao (ABC islands) and Belize where seasonal rainfall is expected to be the usual or drier.

La Niña refers to “a cold event”, and during a La Niña year, winter temperatures are warmer than average in the south and cooler than normal in the north.

“A higher frequency of wet days and wet spells is forecast for the eastern Caribbean where rainfall is expected to be at least as wet as or wetter than the usual, which should taper the chances of wildfire and promote water reservoir capacity,” CariCOF said. It said extreme wet spells for the region are not expected to feature prominently during the upcoming season.

CariCOF said the end of 2021 stood out in terms of a quiet cessation to the hurricane season, along with dry seasonal rainfall anomalies for much of the eastern Caribbean. Heat discomfort progressively decreased along the three-month period, as the Caribbean transitioned out of the 2021 heat season.

According to CariCOF, rainfall totals from February to April are likely to be at least as high as usual in the ABC islands, Lesser Antilles, and the Guianas; but likely the usual or drier in the Bahamas and Cuba. ■



Region's trade to rebound after 2020 drop, says ECLAC

International trade in Latin America and the Caribbean will experience a significant rebound in 2021 after the sharp drop recorded in 2020, according to a recent report from ECLAC. In its annual flagship report, entitled ‘International Trade Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean’, ECLAC said that this recovery will be asymmetrical and very heterogenous between the region’s countries, in a context of great uncertainty due to the crisis stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report projects a 25 per cent increase in the value of regional goods exports for 2021 – after a 10 per cent drop in 2020 – driven by a 17 per cent rise in export prices and an 8 per cent expansion in the volume of shipments.



Meanwhile, the value of goods imports increased by 32 per cent, with a 20 per cent expansion in volume and a 12 per cent rise in prices. In 2022, it estimates that the value of regional exports and imports of goods will grow by 10 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively, in a context of lower regional and global economic growth.

The report estimates that the Caribbean will benefit from high prices for the oil, gas and bauxite exported by Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, respectively. The increase in goods exports in 2021 is due mainly to higher prices for basic products – above all minerals, hydrocarbons and agro-industrial products – more than greater volume.

In addition, regional exports of services have still not recovered from the decline suffered as a result of the pandemic. Specifically, the regional dependence on tourism is much greater than the global average, which has meant that the uncertainty surrounding the reopening of this sector negatively affects the prospects of various economies, especially

those in the Caribbean, ECLAC warns. In sum, the recovery of regional trade in 2021 shows significant weaknesses.

ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, said at the launch: “This situation should prompt reflection about the urgency of deepening regional economic integration. Moving towards an integrated regional market is indispensable, not only for generating efficient scales of production and promoting processes of productive and export diversification, but also for achieving greater autonomy in strategic sectors. This last goal has acquired particular relevance in light of the disturbances caused by the pandemic in global supply chains.”

According to the report, the greatest dynamism is seen in trade with China and within the region itself, although they exhibit very different dynamics. In 2021, the annual variation in the value of regional exports to China is 35 per cent, whereas that figure within the region of Latin America and the Caribbean is 33 per cent. Shipments are seen growing by 23 per cent to the European

Union, and by 19 per cent to the United States.

The International Trade Outlook also addresses the challenge of achieving regional productive autonomy in the healthcare industry. Latin America and the Caribbean has a persistent trade deficit in the pharmaceutical sector and just 13 per cent of its imports come from within the region, which puts it in a vulnerable situation when there are disruptions in external supply.

In many of the region’s countries, the local market is not large enough to foster a competitive scale of production in the pharmaceutical sector or in that of medical devices. This shows the importance of implementing policies that would promote greater integration of national markets, with the aim of creating a broader, stable market that could provide the incentives needed to expand regional production.

Finally, the report analyses the contribution of international trade to the circular economy. This economy seeks more sustainable use of materials and products, preserving their value and utility for the longest amount of time possible. In this area, ECLAC urges the region’s countries to incorporate the perspective of the circular economy into their trade agendas. It also calls for harmonizing rules and regulations among countries and reducing trade barriers with the aim of creating regional markets, as well as increasing recycled inputs and products in the chains of natural resource-exporting sectors, such as mining, agro-industry and forestry.



ECLAC meeting addresses non-communicable diseases in the Caribbean

A common definition for a circular economy describes it as an economic system based on the reuse and regeneration of materials or products, especially as a means of continuing production in a sustainable or environmentally friendly way.

ECLAC Caribbean recently published a policy brief, entitled, 'Conceptualizing a circular economy in the Caribbean: perspectives and possibilities', which examines the nature of a circular economy, and the prospects for reorienting Caribbean small island developing states (SIDS) economies in that direction. An important observation from the analysis is that a circular economy contemplates a far wider scope than the practice of recycling, as is typically presented.

This is significant, since economy of scale issues alone would limit the prospects for a profitable and

sustainable recycling economy in the Caribbean. By applying the broader scope of minimizing negative externalities however, it can be seen that there are many more options for embracing a circular approach to economic and social development.

Moreover, there is evidence that the subregion has already adopted strategies for moving their economies in that direction. The imperatives of global climate change suggest the need for a more formalized and deliberate approach to the application of a circular economy strategy in the Caribbean.

The policy brief makes several recommendations to support a sustainable circular economy for the Caribbean. These are:

1. Promote renewable energy development

2. Promote efficient waste minimization

3. Promote efficient water pricing and regulation

4. Implement performance bonds for public/cultural events

5. Develop efficient land-based transportation

6. Apply Pigouvian (green) taxes

7. Establish green and blue investment bonds

8. Set optimal carrying capacity limits for the natural resource base

9. Promote elements of a shared economy.

The brief notes that in transitioning to a circular economy for the Caribbean, there are some things to consider. For instance, the



centrality of materials and energy in the circular economy discourse to date suggests that it is best oriented towards extractive and manufacturing economies, for which the options for reuse, remanufacturing and recycling may be more obvious.

In order for this likelihood to be operationalized in the small, open, serviced-based economies of the Caribbean, some peculiarities of the subregion provide ample options for a circular economy development. Apart from a few exceptions, for which minerals and agriculture are the principal economic sectors, Caribbean countries are highly dependent on tourism services to drive their economies. These services are provided in the form of accommodation, food and entertainment, and depend substantially on the subregion's natural assets, which are the sun, sea, and pristine environments.

Another important characteristic of the Caribbean is its high dependence on imported fossil energy. Only Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and recently Guyana, possess significant domestic energy resources, with the remaining countries being net energy importers.

Over the recent decade however, several Caribbean countries have begun to make significant investments in renewable energy (mainly solar, wind and geothermal) as a strategy to both reduce their energy insecurity, as well as to meet their climate mitigation obligations under the Paris Accord.

All of the above factors, and more, make a good case for the consideration of a circular approach to the future development of Caribbean economies. This rationale is bolstered by the possibility that high dependence on energy imports, along with the scale limitations

of small markets, has stymied the efficient development of other subsectors such as for example, manufacturing.

Hence options for reorienting traditional economies through reuse and reduction of materials and energy remain limited. Moreover, given that the successful provision of tourism services is so intimately linked to the preservation of the natural environment, a circular economy strategy which seeks to minimize material and energy use is prudent.

For further details on this policy brief, please access it at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ia09PY> ■



COVID-19 presence confirmed on Caribbean cruises

Almost all of the cruise ships presently sailing through the Caribbean have travelers with COVID-19, according to a report from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The report was confirmed by several Caribbean ports that have refused to allow ships to reach their shores and for travelers to disembark.

On the subject, the shipping group Carnival Cruise implemented measures such as the mandatory use of masks and vaccination certificates, but the Omicron variant causes an increasing number of infections and the prohibition of disembarking in some ports in the region.

Carnival spokesman Roger Frizzell explained in a statement that the health and safety protocols in place have proven effective time and time again over the last year, thus restarting travel across all of their brands.

Of the 86 cruise ships investigated by the United States' national public health agency, Carnival was responsible for 32 cases, Royal Caribbean for 25 and Norwegian for 15.

CDC now also monitors four other ships operated by Disney Cruise Line, so the list is constantly changing, and the next stage for ships with outbreaks could involve taking additional public health measures. ■



Welcome to George Scheibner

As the ECLAC family gradually returned to office in January, we were joined by a new staff member. The Hummingbird takes this opportunity to welcome Mr. George Scheibner, our new Administrative Officer, in the Administration Unit, following the transfer of Jeanette Song'e to New York.

Scheibner possesses over 24 years' of international professional experience, 17 of which were dedicated to serving the United Nations, mostly in field duty stations. His most recent posting was with the UN African Union Mission in Darfur, where he held positions as Senior Administrative Officer, Senior Mission Support Officer and Chief Integrated Mission Training Officer.

Scheibner also held the following positions during his career as HR Strategy Advisor, Senior Human Resources Manager, Senior Training Officer, Learning and Development Specialist, Conduct and Discipline Officer, and Best Practices Officer just to name a few.

He is the holder of a Master's in Business Administration from the Thunderbird School of Global Management in Arizona, USA, a Master's in Administration in Middle East Studies from the American University in Cairo, and a Bachelor of Arts (Magna Cum Laude) from San Francisco State University. Scheibner is also a multilingualist and fluently speaks Arabic, Catalan, English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, some Russian and Spanish. ■

The Denver Omelet

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 10 mins

Servings: 1

What you will need:

- 3 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ¼ cup diced smoked ham
- 2 tablespoons diced onion
- 2 tablespoons diced green bell pepper
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper

How to Make it:

Step 1: Beat eggs in a small bowl until just combined; do not overbeat.

Step 2: Melt butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add ham, onion, and bell pepper; season with salt and pepper. Cook and stir until onions soften and ham begins to caramelize, about 5 minutes.

Step 3: Reduce heat to medium-low and pour in eggs. Mix briefly with a spatula while shaking the pan to ensure ingredients are evenly distributed. Quickly run the spatula along edges of omelet. Sprinkle Cheddar cheese and cayenne pepper over omelet.

Step 4: Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until top is still wet but not runny, about 5 minutes. Use a spatula to fold omelet in half and transfer it to a plate.



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