DOMINICA WORKSHOP
DISCUSSES CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER INDICATORS

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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

5 September
International Day of Charity

8 September
International Literacy Day

12 September
United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation

21 September
International Day of Peace

UPCOMING MEETINGS

24 AUGUST 2022
Seminar Beyond GDP: statistical challenges of measuring development

29 AUGUST 2022
Universal recognition of the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment: Presentation of the UN General Assembly Resolution and its implications for public policy

30 AUGUST 2022
Second Regional Seminar on Social Development: "Social Security and the Protracted Crisis: An Opportunity to Combat Inequality in the Framework of a Welfare State in Latin America and the Caribbean"
A national workshop was recently held in Dominica, to encourage the compilation of climate change and disaster indicators to support evidence-based decision-making.

Held in hybrid format (virtual and in-person) from 19 to 21 July, the workshop was jointly organized by ECLAC Caribbean’s Statistics and Social Development Unit and the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC Santiago.

ECLAC noted that the Caribbean is affected by climate change, particularly the small island developing States (SIDS), and Dominica is no exception. As with all Caribbean countries, the availability of appropriate indicators is necessary to respond to the effects of climate change. Dominica is situated in the tropical cyclone belt and is directly exposed to the forces of the oceans. As a small geographical area, disasters could affect vast proportions of the island.
FOR THE WHOLE CARIBBEAN?

What if a tourist could travel across the Caribbean on a single visa? That’s the idea of Jamaica Tourism Minister, Edmund Bartlett, who said the implementation of a regional tourist visa regime among Caribbean Community (CARICOM) nations had “huge economic potential.”

“A regional visa regime is something that we’ve been talking about. I think if we are to build Caribbean tourism, then we must recognize that as individual States, we are too small to grow and to benefit from the recovery of tourism as it now stands, but together as a region, we can grow and we can benefit,” Bartlett said.

That would create the potential for a multi-destination tourism network, Bartlett said. More importantly, it would create a single common airspace, where airlines flying to the Caribbean would pay one fee. The idea would be that a traveler could clear customs in Jamaica and then be “domestic” across the countries of the Caribbean Community, from Barbados to Antigua to Trinidad.

“It will bring more airlines into our space, because the turnaround time for the aircraft will be significantly reduced as a result. More rotations could be had, and thus more visitors can come in,” Bartlett says.

“The other element of importance is that it also provides a new skill set to be developed in the Caribbean area. What tourism will be doing is now saying, we’re not just people who have bartenders, cooks and housekeepers, but we are into technology, aviation, logistics and procurement,” he said.

It’s not completely without precedent. Indeed, for the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup, CARICOM treated the nine host countries (and Dominica) as a single domestic space for travelers for nearly three months.

A SINGLE TOURIST VISA FOR THE WHOLE CARIBBEAN?

The two ECLAC divisions joined forces to enhance the production and use of key indicators and metrics to monitor and adapt to the effects of climate change and strengthen Environmental Information Systems (EIS).

These efforts were supported by the United Nations Development Account initiative, titled “Generating climate change and disasters indicators for policy decision-making”, which aimed to boost the environmental pillar of the 2030 Agenda. They also support the improvement in policy coherence for the implementation of the Escazú Agreement, the Revised St.

George’s Declaration (SGD 2040), the SAMOA Pathway, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework.

The workshop brought together 21 representatives from Dominica’s Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment, Physical Planning Division, Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation (DSWMC), Dominica Electricity Services Ltd. (DOMLEC), Dominica Water and Sewerage Company Ltd. (DOWASCO), Forestry Wildlife and Parks Division, Fisheries Division, Independent Regulatory Commission, Agriculture Division and Meteorological Service.

Participants were taught how to build select environment, climate change and disaster indicators and its metadata. They also benefitted from learning how to identify data and capacity gaps to develop an EIS and build a regional resilience platform. Participants were also shown how geospatial data can enhance the use of environment, climate change and disaster indicators for effective decision-making.

Three new climate change and disaster indicators were built and their methodological sheets developed. These were (1) Divers - Contribution of diesel fuels in total electrical energy supply; (2) Vulnerability - Proportion of population living in coastal areas and (3) Mitigation/Adaptation - Percentage change in forest cover.

Participants identified that the main challenges preventing the sustained production and dissemination of the newly built indicators, were insufficient environmental data on websites, limited awareness within the country on the importance of the indicators, the need for more consistent and frequent data to be available, lack of efficient allocation of human resources and lack of investment in existing ones, and the need for better data storage.

Recommendations were made to address these challenges, including the implementation of proper documentation of the data, creation of linkages to different data sources into one centralized system, making data available in user friendly formats for data management, and the establishment of a coordination mechanism for data collection.
Joint ECLAC Caribbean and CCRIF workshops on effective applications of geospatial technologies and data in support of disaster risk management

ECONOMIC SURVEY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN launch of ECLAC flagship report

LAUNCH OF ECLAC FLAGSHIP REPORT
ECONOMIC SURVEY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
In a new edition of its annual flagship report, “Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean”, ECLAC noted the challenges of generating investment and growth in a context of growing external and domestic restrictions.

Presented at a press conference on 23 August at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, the report examines trends and the challenges of investing for a sustainable and inclusive recovery, within a projection of 2.7 per cent average economic growth for the current year in a context of acute macroeconomic restrictions, which are hurting the region’s economies.
According to the report, a sequence of crises has led to the scenario of low growth and accelerating inflation seen in the global economy, and this – coupled with lower growth in trade, the dollar’s appreciation and tougher global financial conditions – will negatively affect the region’s countries.

“In a context of multiple goals and growing restrictions, there must be a coordination of macroeconomic policies that would support the acceleration of growth, investment, and poverty and inequality reduction, while also addressing inflationary dynamics,” Mario Cimoli, Acting Executive Secretary of ECLAC, stated during the launch of the Economic Survey 2022.

The document emphasizes that Latin American and Caribbean countries are facing a difficult economic outlook in 2022 and in the coming years. Lower economic growth is compounded by strong inflationary pressures, little job creation, declining investment and growing social demands. This situation has translated into major challenges for macroeconomic policy, which must strike a balance between policies that would drive the economic growth and those aimed at controlling inflation and ensuring the sustainability of public finances.
In addition to the region’s complex domestic challenge, the report indicates, there is an international scenario, caused by the war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. This includes growing geopolitical tensions, less vigorous global economic growth, reduced availability of food, and higher energy prices that have increased the inflationary pressures already in play, due to the supply shocks prompted by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

ECLAC forecasts that South America will grow 2.6 per cent (compared with 6.9 per cent in 2021); the group made up of Central America and Mexico will expand 2.5 per cent (in comparison with 5.7 per cent in 2021); and the Caribbean – the only subregion that will grow more than in 2021 – will experience a 4.7 per cent expansion in 2022, without including Guyana (in comparison with 4.0 per cent a year earlier).

The Economic Survey 2022 also shows that the Ukraine conflict intensified the upward trend for commodities prices that had already emerged starting in the second half of 2020, leading some of these prices to hit historic highs. For the region on average, the effect is mixed, and a 7 per cent decline in the terms of trade for basic products is forecast.

Inflation, meanwhile, has continued to rise, reaching a regional average of 8.4 per cent as of June 2022, which is equivalent to more than double the average value recorded in the 2005-2019 period. At a subregional level, as of June 2022, the economies of South America had the highest level of inflation on average (8.8 per cent), followed by the economies in the group composed of Central America and Mexico (7.5 per cent) and those in the English-speaking Caribbean (7.3 per cent). This has prompted central banks to raise their monetary policy rates and reduce monetary aggregates.

The second section of ECLAC’s report stresses that low growth in investment in the last three decades has become a constraint to development. This means that reactivating investment is central to achieving growth, since investment is the bridge between the short and medium term.

Between 1951 and 1979, gross fixed capital formation (the stock of capital) grew 5.9 per cent annually on average in real terms, while between 1990 and 2021 the annual rate of average investment growth was just 2.9 per cent. That is why ECLAC is making an urgent call to increase investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was positioned at the lowest levels when compared with other regions in late 2021.

To achieve this, greater coordination is needed between fiscal, monetary and exchange-rate policy, and authorities must take advantage of the full set of tools at their disposal to ensure that growth and investment is not subordinated to anti-inflationary policy. In addition, macroeconomic efforts must be complemented by industrial, trade and social policies and the care economy, the document indicates.

Finally, while the report emphasizes that an important part of the financing to increase investment should come from domestic resource mobilization, international cooperation must accompany this process. For that reason, official development assistance and financing from global financial institutions and development banks should be significantly increased.

The Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022 can be accessed through this link:

CLICK HERE
ECLAC’s proposed Caribbean Resilience Fund (CRF) was recently described as a lifeline for Caribbean small island developing States (SIDS) struggling with climate crises and rising debt. This was after a four-day high-level meeting in Saint John’s, Antigua and Barbuda (26 to 29 July), which also explored important next steps for initiating the CRF.

The CRF aims to provide countries in the subregion with financial resources to strengthen their resilience and restructure their debt. It is essentially proposed as a special purpose financing vehicle intended to leverage long-term affordable development finance for the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, ECLAC’s debt for climate adaptation swap initiative is an ongoing Caribbean-wide proposal, which seeks to substantively address the high and unsustainable level of debt of many Caribbean economies, which has compromised the growth trajectory of the subregion. The initiative actively promotes consideration of a strategy to address the high debt - low growth dilemma of the Caribbean in a sustainable manner, while fostering investment in climate adaptation and resilience building.

According to ECLAC Caribbean, the subregion has experienced over 385 climate-related disasters since 1990. Since 2000, there have been eight major
disasters, costing countries between 33 and 200 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP). Annual losses from catastrophic climate events in the Caribbean are estimated at US $3 billion. In addition to their vulnerability, Caribbean countries are some of the most indebted in the world. In 2018, the average Caribbean debt was 70.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

With the financial support of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and small island developing States (SIDS), ECLAC convened the high-level meeting with representatives of governments and experts from across the Caribbean to discuss the next steps in the establishment of the CRF. In-depth discussions addressed how the fund would be structured, how Caribbean countries would access the fund, where the fund would be housed and its related governance structure.

In addressing the meeting, ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, outlined some essential characteristics for the CRF, including that it should be efficient and effective, credible, and inspire confidence in investors (both domestic and international), as well as supportive in offering capacity building-collaboration with other funds and agencies.

She explained that the proposed structure would be a combination of growth and resilience, under the banners of adaptation and mitigation priorities, and liability management operations (LMOs). “These two windows will offer a range of instruments to meet unique needs of Member States. These instruments will include blended finance and syndicated loans; concessional finance for agriculture and food security; infrastructure bonds; green bonds for renewable energy; and credit guarantees.”

Discussions in Antigua took into consideration these next steps to operationalize the CRF. The proposed structure of the CRF is expected to be finalized by the end of 2022. Representatives from the fund’s three pilot countries, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomed progress on the establishment of the fund and reiterated their support to advocate for the fund among other Caribbean countries.
Tourism in Antigua and Barbuda is reportedly breaking recovery records, buoyed by a surge in visitors from the United States. The surge has made the country one of the hottest destinations in the Caribbean, particularly in the summer of 2022.

Antigua and Barbuda welcomed almost 25,000 visitors to the island in July, representing a 7 per cent increase over the same month in 2019, before the pandemic — which had itself been a record for the month.

“For a second year, we are experiencing a healthy summer season as consumer travel confidence grows, and travelers make the decision to take that long-awaited vacation or previously delayed trip,” said Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Minister Charles Fernandez.

Antigua and Barbuda has also seen strong growth from the United Kingdom market, with a 5 percent increase in UK visits over the same period in 2019. Fernandez noted that just under 9,700 visitors stayed in hotels, while just under 11,500 visitors stayed in villas and guest houses.
“Antigua and Barbuda is presently listed among the top 10 Caribbean destinations leading the Caribbean tourism recovery efforts,” said Colin C. James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

“With good month-on-month growth and our overall tourism arrivals for the year to date only 16 per cent less than the 2019 figures, Antigua and Barbuda’s tourism rebound prospects are looking positive, particularly when we consider global tourism forecasts. For the Fall, our teams will continue to focus on closing the gap and achieving full recovery.”
High quality education is traditionally a cornerstone of Caribbean development. By making important advancement in education, the subregion was able to optimize the potential of its peoples. This approach resulted in a highly educated Caribbean diaspora.

Noting that the 2020–2029 decade has been termed the “Decade of Action” for sustainable development, there is need for the Caribbean to urgently pursue its human capital development, even as the subregion deals with many economic, social, and environmental challenges they face as a community of small island developing States (SIDS).

In this context, a new study from ECLAC Caribbean, entitled, “Addressing gender disparities in education and employment”, examines data on school enrolment and academic performance to discern any gender disparity in access to education and academic performance of students.

In recent years, there have been growing concerns regarding the quality of education outcomes in Caribbean countries, especially at the primary and secondary school levels, which center around numeracy and literacy competencies of school graduates. In addition, there are questions regarding the functional skills of tertiary education graduates that might be inadequate for the labour market.

Women and girls are major consumers of educational services in the Caribbean. This heightens the importance of ensuring a gender perspective regarding the issue of quality education in the subregion.

The Caribbean has recorded notable progress in improving access to education during this millennium. This includes increasing enrolment of both sexes at the primary school level and of women and girls at all levels of education. However, despite the improvement in educational participation of women and girls, especially at the tertiary level, there is a disproportionately higher level of unemployment among young women relative to young men.

The study reveals that unemployment, particularly among youth and women, is a major social challenge in some countries of the Caribbean. The average unemployment rate for persons
aged 15-24 years was 35.2 per cent for females and 22.1 per cent for males in 2002. The rates improved marginally to 33.4 per cent for females and 20.6 per cent for males of the same age group in 2016 (ECLAC 2018).

These are in stark contrast to the average unemployment rate of 7.4 per cent for the general population in 2017 (ILO, 2017). This suggests that the educational participation and educational attainment of young women and girls have not translated to economic opportunities for them.

Meanwhile, there is an ongoing debate on the reasons why women, especially young women, continue to have limited opportunities in the labour market in comparison to their male counterparts. While women represent a high majority of the public sector workforce, they occupy a proportionately lower percentage of senior and executive positions.

These facts have prompted the call for girls and women to examine their chosen field of study so to impact their skills set, employability, and career track. Conversely, there are increasing calls for educators and policymakers to pay attention to the underperformance of boys at the primary and secondary school levels, as this has implications for their participation in tertiary education.

Considering the varying concerns regarding equity in quality education in the Caribbean, the study examines whether gender disparities exist in access to education and educational achievement among Caribbean youth, and the implications of such disparities, where they may exist, for the sustainable development of the subregion.

Read more on this study here.
BVI FESTIVAL IS BACK

WITH OPENING OF FESTIVILLE
across generations passed, we give thanks for our freedom.”

Rymer encouraged residents to have fun, urged unity, and called for a non-violent, crime-free festival. He said for a lot of people, emancipation meant coming out and having some fun. The fun part, he noted, was the celebration, but the real meaning lay in the emancipation, which should be celebrated for what it was.

Historical information shared on the night, informed that the BVI in 1871 became a part of the Leeward Islands colony —151 years ago. In 1956, it became a territory on its own, signaling the advancements made. Emancipation was granted in 1834, and the territory still has a long way to go, although it has grown by getting its first legislature in 1950.

Rymer cited yet another advancement — getting a modern Constitution and self-government in 2007. “As recently as January 2021, a Commissioner was appointed to do a Commission of Inquiry and in exactly 16 months later, that Commissioner submitted a report to the governor and in that report, the governor was told part of our constitution should be suspended and impose direct rule on our country,” he said.

“I want you, the people, to understand what’s going on in this place. The point I’m trying to make here tonight, is that we should not take our emancipation lightly. We have been celebrating for 188 years and we can see at this particular point in time in our development, what can happen to us,” he said.

We’re truly happy that this year we’re physically able to commemorate this important and historic milestone in our Virgin Islands history.”

“TORTOLA—

That’s how British Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee Chairman Dirk Walters summed up the recent opening of the Bernard “Yampie” Nibbs Festiville, to kick off the territory’s 68th annual August Festival activities.

Others on his committee also expressed similar sentiments, following a two-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to declaring the festival village opened, Culture Minister Sharie deCastro reminded those gathered for the night of festivities that “over the last two years, we’ve had to celebrate our emancipation virtually.”

Kye Rymer, acting Premier in the absence of Premier Natalio Wheatley, called for a moment of silence in memory of the 63 residents who have died from COVID-19. Of that total, 36 people died last July, forcing the cancellation of planned festival activities.

“We’re celebrating the 188th year of our emancipation and the 68th year of celebrating our festival,” Rymer said. “We remember the generations of our fore parents, who lived, toiled and died, without even experiencing the sweet taste of freedom. It is moments like these we come together and give thanks for the blessings that have been bestowed on us as a territory
A team of explorers recently announced that they had uncovered a treasure, including coins, gemstones and priceless jewels, from a 350-year-old sunken Spanish galleon off the Bahamas.

The Nuestra Seora de las Maravillas, or Our Lady of Wonders, sank in 1656 after it collided with another ship from its own fleet. It was carrying a treasure, some of which was reserved as a royal tax for King Philip IV, from Cuba to Seville, Spain. Also, the 891-ton ship contained more cargo than usual, as it was transporting treasure retrieved from another ship that had previously sunk.

Shipwreck specialist Allen Exploration, which carried out a two-year expedition beginning in 2020, said several attempts have been made to retrieve the ship’s cargo, with almost US $3.5 million worth of items being recovered in the past.

The latest discoveries would be displayed soon at the new Bahamas Maritime Museum in the nation’s second largest city, Freeport.

In a statement, project marine archaeologist, James Sinclair, said the researchers, in coordination with local divers, archaeologists and other experts, were also "reconstructing the mystery of how the ship was wrecked and fell apart."

More discoveries are yet to be made, Sinclair added, stating, "The ship may have been obliterated by past salvage and hurricanes. But we’re convinced there are more stories out there."
COCONUT TURNOVERS

What you will need:

**DOUGH**
- 7 grams active dry yeast (1 pkg)
- 1/4 cup warm water (112 degrees f)
- 2/3 milk
- 1/2 Tbsp. white vinegar
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup softened butter
- 1/4 cup sugar (castor)
- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt

**FILLING**
- 2 cups dry coconut (grated fresh or pack, unsweetened)
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

How to Make it:

**FILLING:**
Add all the ingredients for the filling, minus the extracts to a saucepan and cook on medium heat until most, if not all the water, is evaporated. Remove from the heat, stir in the extracts and leave to cool.

**DOUGH:**
Step 1: Add vinegar to milk, mix and set aside.

Step 2: Add yeast to warm water and leave to proof.

Step 3: In a large mixing bowl cream butter and sugar together, add egg and mix well.

Step 4: Add milk mixture and yeast mixture and mix once more.

Step 5: Combine flour baking powder and salt in another bowl.

Step 6: Add 1/3 of flour into milk mixture and stir until incorporated.

Step 7: Add another 1/3 flour and mix to form sticky dough.

Step 8: Flour kneading surface with remaining flour. Turn out the contents of the mixing bowl onto the floured surface and knead well (at least 10 mins) incorporating all the remaining flour. (If using a stand mixer, just add the remaining flour and knead until dough is smooth, about 6 mins).
Step 9: Divide the dough into 16 pieces and form small dough balls.

Step 10: With a rolling pin, roll each dough ball into a 6 by 3-inch rectangle-like shape.

Step 11: Spread with approx. 2 tbsp of filling and roll into a log 3 inches long. Remember to pinch the seam to prevent the filling from falling out.

Step 12: Bake for 25 mins in a 350 degrees f or 180 c until brown.

Step 13: Immediately brush with butter after removal from the oven to keep the tops soft.

To Serve:

Brush with simple syrup and garnish with toasted coconut.
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