

# the Humming Bird



## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

BUILD MARINE ECONOMY

## UN ECLAC UPDATES GDP ESTIMATES

FOR EACH OF THE REGION'S  
COUNTRIES

## CARIBBEAN NATIONS LEAD ZERO WASTE MOVEMENT

AT WORLD CIRCULAR ECONOMY  
FORUM 2025



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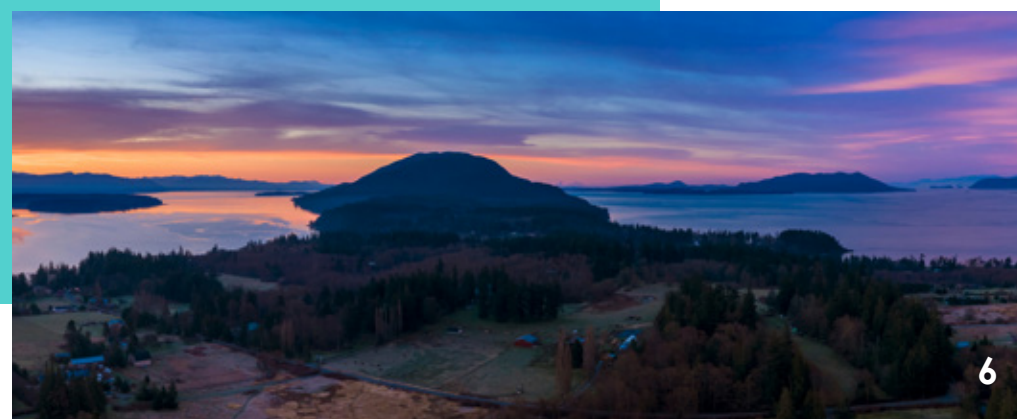
## ABOUT US

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.

### EDITORIAL TEAM

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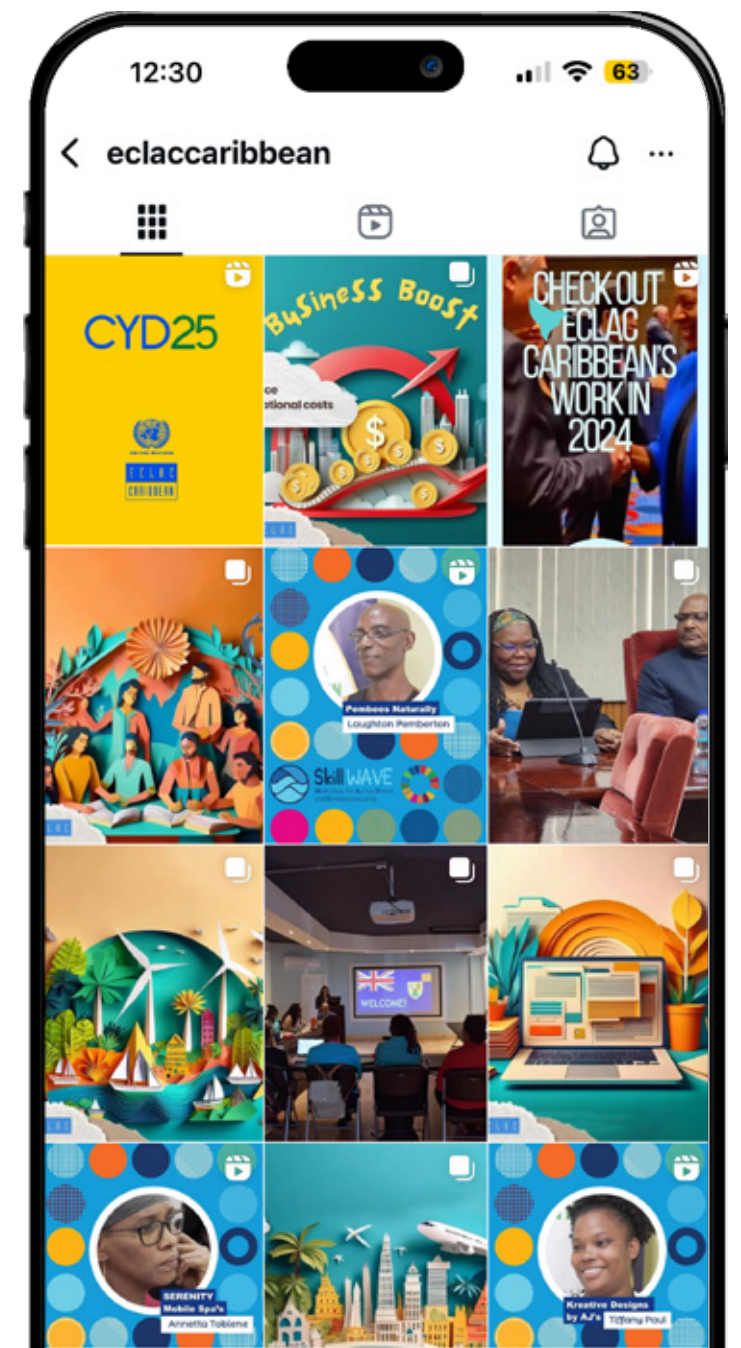
## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 22 May**  
International Day for Biological Diversity
- 4 June**  
International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
- 5 June**  
World Environment Day
- 8 June**  
World Oceans Day

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- 16 - 20 JUNE 2025**  
National training course in project proposal preparation and effective project implementation -Antigua and Barbuda
- 24 - 26 JUNE 2025**  
Fifth Regional Seminar on Social Development

## JOIN US ON INSTAGRAM



# LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN BUILD

## SUSTAINABLE, JUST & INCLUSIVE MARINE ECONOMY

ECLAC, in conjunction with the Embassies of Costa Rica and France in Chile, held a virtual event entitled “Regional Blue Talk: Latin America and the Caribbean On the Road to the Third United Nations Ocean Conference 2025.”

Latin America and the Caribbean is home to 47 of the world’s 258 marine ecoregions, and the vast majority of our countries (23) have more marine territory than land area. On average, 50% of the region’s territory corresponds to the ocean. In the Caribbean islands, this proportion rises to 91% and is nearly 99% in some States such as Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda. That is why

the region is positioned as a crucial strategic actor in the marine life agenda and why it has a historic opportunity to build a sustainable, just and inclusive marine economy.

This was according to the participants in a virtual event entitled Regional Blue Talk: Latin America and the Caribbean On the Road to the Third United Nations Ocean Conference 2025 (UNOC3), which took place this Tuesday, May 13, organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Embassies of Costa Rica and France in Chile.

The event’s objective was to offer a

platform for dialogue in preparation for the UNOC3 where experts, government representatives and key stakeholders could identify regional and subregional priorities, specificities and challenges, share experiences, and formulate recommendations that would contribute to building a shared regional perspective on this issue.

The meeting was inaugurated by José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, ECLAC’s Executive Secretary, and Gina Guillén Grillo, Director General of Foreign Policy and Presidential Envoy for the Ocean of Costa Rica.

In his welcome remarks, Salazar-Xirinachs emphasized that this event

represents a unique opportunity to strengthen our collaboration and commitment to protecting the ocean.

“The ocean economy is highly diverse and ever more relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean’s economic and social development. Activities such as fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transport and tourism contribute significantly to the population’s income and to employment in our region. However, this relevance is still not reflected in sufficient investment in marine-coastal science, technology and innovation. In addition, our marine ecosystems face increasing pressure, in the form of overfishing, pollution by plastics and nutrients, biodiversity loss, and the impacts of climate change, such as acidification and rising sea levels. All of this, without yet contemplating the risks associated with the possible development of deep-sea mining, the expansion of which poses serious questions about the integrity of habitats that have yet to be studied much and about global rules for its governance,” the senior United Nations official warned.

In this context, he explained, the Third United Nations Ocean Conference – which will be held in Nice, France in June – represents a key opportunity for making progress on concrete commitments and strengthening the role of Latin America and the Caribbean in the global ocean agenda.

The Executive Secretary announced that ECLAC has produced, with support from French Cooperation, a study entitled Overview of the ocean, seas and marine resources in Latin America and the Caribbean’s sustainable development, which will be presented next month during the UNOC3 on June 12, at a joint side event with the CAF and the governments of France and Costa Rica, in the blue zone. The report offers an updated perspective on the region’s main progress, challenges and opportunities in relation to fulfilling SDG 14, which aspires to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.” This publication aims to produce evidence and public policy recommendations that would promote a sustainable blue economy and contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Meanwhile, Gina Guillén Grillo noted that the Third UN Ocean Conference, co-chaired by France and Costa Rica, has as its theme “accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean.” It is the right time for the region to mobilize and address the challenges we face in preserving and utilizing the ocean in a sustainable way, she said.

“It is very important that in our region we find solutions to the crises facing the ocean through strategies to accelerate the fulfillment of SDG 14. That is why several of our

countries are promoting this blue agenda,” the high-level Costa Rican representative stated. She added that there is still a major disconnect between the level of threat to the ocean and the level of investment for tackling it. “That is one of the major challenges that we have to address,” she indicated.

The Regional Blue Talk for Latin America and the Caribbean event was structured around three panels that addressed, in a systemic manner, the challenges under SDG 14: i) towards sustainable fisheries and effective ocean governance; ii) the transition to a sustainable blue economy in the context of climate change; and iii) action, cooperation, and governance for a clean and healthy ocean. The participants in the discussions included specialists in various marine issues, leaders of regional artisanal fishing organizations and of women’s networks in maritime authorities who emphasized the importance of their voice being heard in these kinds of debates, international scientists, and specialists from United Nations organizations that study environmental phenomena related to the ocean.

Speaking in the event’s closing segment were Javier Medina, ECLAC’s acting Deputy Executive Secretary; Renaud Collard, First Counsellor of the Embassy of France in Chile; and Adriana Murillo, Costa Rica’s Ambassador to Chile.





A **Hummingbird**  
FEATURE

# UN ECLAC UPDATES GDP ESTIMATES

FOR EACH OF THE REGION'S  
COUNTRIES

**T**he Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) downwardly revised its growth projection for the region's economies in 2025.

According to new estimates released today, the United Nations organization forecasts that the region will grow 2.0% on average this year, which is four-tenths lower than what was projected in December 2024.



## UN ECLAC UPDATES GDP ESTIMATES FOR EACH OF THE REGION'S COUNTRIES

By subregion, the downward revision is greater for the Caribbean (eight-tenths lower, excluding Guyana) and for Central America and Mexico (seven-tenths lower) than it is for South America, where the downward revision is just one-tenth. The growth rates expected given the new revision are 2.5% in South America, 1.0% in Central America and Mexico and 1.8% in the Caribbean (excluding Guyana).

According to ECLAC, the region is facing a very complex and highly uncertain international scenario. The tariff-related announcements made by the United States not only have direct effects on what the region's countries export to that economy, but they also have indirect effects via greater volatility in international financial markets, with significant fluctuations in stock and bond markets, which

has clear implications for the yield of assets and of the interest rate in the United States and for the main global financial markets.

These announcements and the geoeconomic confrontation sparked have increased the risk of severe disruptions in global production chains and in international trade flows. All these factors have prompted a downward revision for growth

prospects at a global level and particularly among the region's main trading partners: the United States and China. For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in April downwardly revised its growth projection for the U.S. from 2.7% (which it had estimated in January) to 1.8%; for the Euro zone, from 1% to 0.8%, and for China from 4.6% to 4.0%.

For the region, this has entailed significant changes to the macro conditions contemplated in ECLAC's last annual economic report, the Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean 2024, published last December. This includes a deceleration in external aggregate demand, which could prompt increased imbalances in external accounts in 2025 beyond what had been anticipated, an increase in exchange-rate volatility, and greater accumulation of international

reserves for precautionary purposes. Similarly, a deceleration is expected in domestic aggregate demand, where although private consumption will continue to be the main determinant of regional growth, its pace is expected to continue decreasing.

Investment will show less dynamism than what was contemplated in the Preliminary Overview 2024, in accordance with the prospects for deceleration seen in global trade and particularly among the region's main trading partners, and the greater uncertainty being shown by the global economy.

Thus, there is an intensification in the region of the major challenge of reversing the path of low economic growth it has shown in the last decade, ECLAC indicates. Invigorating growth requires a combination of more proactive macroeconomic and productive development policies than those

the region has had up to now, increasing investment in physical and human capital, and putting productive development agendas into practice in dynamic driving sectors. That is why the region not only must invest more, but it also must invest better. This involves adopting new technologies, promoting cluster initiatives and good business practices, fostering deep improvements in the process of capital accumulation, and properly harnessing economies' social and environmental capital.





# BELIZE ADVANCES TOWARDS

## INCLUSIVE AND MULTI-HAZARD EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Belize strengthens its multi-hazard early warning systems through national consultations and global partnerships to enhance resilience and security

The first national consultation on the “Early Warnings for All” (EW4All) initiative marked a key step in assessing the current state of early warning systems in Belize and identifying gaps that will inform the development of a concrete national roadmap. This plan will guide the country towards accessible, inclusive, and multi-hazard early warning systems that go beyond meteorological risks and incorporate a broader range of threats.

Held from May 5 to 7, the consultation was convened by the Government of Belize, the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office, and partners such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the

World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The meeting enabled the consolidation of a national diagnosis of gaps and opportunities, as well as the outlining of pillars and areas for improvement that will shape a coordinated national strategy.

“Let this workshop be the starting point for a renewed national commitment: where we strengthen our multi-hazard early warning systems, mobilize the necessary financial and human resources, and align our efforts with ongoing initiatives. ‘Early Warnings for All’ should not be just a vision of the United Nations—it must be Belize’s vision. Together, with knowledge, partnerships, and willpower, we can build a more resilient and inclusive Belize for future generations,” stated Carlos Pol, Executive Director of the Ministry of Economic Development, on behalf of Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño.

This national process is supported by a set of complementary initiatives. Among them is the development of the Country Work Programme (CWP), led by the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) with support from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), which defines risk management priorities for the next four years. The Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) project—jointly implemented by UNDRR and WMO—enhances the enabling environment for these systems. These efforts are further complemented

by Belize’s active participation in the Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030) initiative.

“We recognize the strong commitment of the Government of Belize to disaster risk reduction, clearly reflected in the development of the CWP and its focus on inclusive and integrated early warning systems,” said Nahuel Arenas, Chief of the UNDRR Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean. “At UNDRR, we reaffirm our support to work alongside local governments in strengthening resilience and protection for all people,” he added.

The consultation also served as a platform to launch the joint programme of the Joint SDG Fund titled “Inclusive Resilience in Safe and Smart Spaces in Belize,” implemented by UN Women and UNDRR, in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government. The programme focuses on urban resilience, gender equality, and community safety, promoting safe and smart spaces and the development of inclusive local resilience plans for Belize City.

The launch began with the official ceremony of Belize City’s accession to the MCR2030 initiative. During the event, Mayor Bernard Wagner formally handed over the signed letter of commitment to the UNDRR Regional Chief, thus marking the city’s incorporation into this global network and reinforcing its commitment to building a safer and more resilient urban future.

“Our participation in MCR2030 goes beyond symbolism. It is a clear statement that Belize City is committed to a future where safety, preparedness, sustainability, and inclusive urban development are not optional, but essential,” declared Mayor Bernard Wagner.

“This effort aims to ensure that more people—especially in the most vulnerable communities—receive timely alerts and know how to respond,” said Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service, Governance, and Disaster Risk Management.

Beyond reports and diagnostics, the true impact of these initiatives will be measured by their ability to save lives and protect livelihoods, particularly in vulnerable communities and among historically excluded groups.

“Belize’s commitment to linking national policies with concrete local actions is an encouraging step towards the goals of the Sendai Framework. This progress reminds us that when we work in coordination and keep people at the center, resilience is not only possible—it is real,” stated Raúl Salazar, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Belize and El Salvador.

Resilience is more than a policy—it is a daily practice that requires coordination, evidence, participation, and political will. On this path, Belize and El Salvador recognize each other as natural partners. What is learned in one context can—and should—strengthen action in the other.

# CARIBBEAN NATIONS LEAD ZERO WASTE MOVEMENT

AT WORLD CIRCULAR ECONOMY FORUM 2025

WRITTEN BY UNEP

**At the World Circular Economy Forum, the Caribbean showed how zero waste strategies can drive economic growth, protect marine ecosystems and foster innovation.**

The Latin America and the Caribbean region generates over 541,000 tonnes of waste daily, with 90% ending up in disposal sites such as landfills and garbage dumps, according to a World Bank report. The Caribbean alone contributes more than 10,000 tonnes each day, much of which pollutes the ocean or fills disposal sites. This growing waste crisis poses serious environmental threats, endangering marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and coastal communities.

The Zero Waste in the Caribbean initiative, funded by the European Union (EU) and the German Government, is reshaping waste management across the region, in collaboration with Cariforum and development partners like the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). This initiative is strategically aligned with the EU Global Gateway Investment Agenda. This ambitious project is more than a cleanup effort—it's

a transformative shift toward circular economies, marine conservation, and green job creation.

At the World Circular Economy Forum 2025 (WCEF2025) in São Paulo, Brazil, Caribbean representatives from Trinidad, Grenada, Belize, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, as well as development partner Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), joined world leaders, innovators and circular economy champions in showcasing innovative solutions that tackle fragmented waste policies, introduce cutting-edge waste treatment technologies and strengthen legislative frameworks. Their presence underscores the importance of global collaboration in scaling these efforts, positioning the Caribbean as a leader in sustainable development.

## Why is this important?

By aligning with WCEF2025's vision, the Caribbean is proving that zero waste strategies can drive economic growth, protect marine ecosystems and



foster innovation—making this more than just a regional initiative, but a blueprint for global sustainability.

At WCEF2025, May 13-16, Caribbean delegates had the opportunity to:

Showcase tangible progress on national waste bans, circular business models, and recycling innovations;

Forge strategic partnerships with financiers and development organizations to scale solutions;

Amplify island priorities in global

discussions on the bio-economy, regeneration, and sustainable production;

Gain insights from regions at the forefront of circular transitions, including Latin America and the Pacific.

The Caribbean's participation in WCEF 2025 fostered collaboration, networking, and private sector engagement, advancing national circular economy initiatives while also unlocking investment

opportunities for sustainable growth. As global leaders shaped the future of sustainable growth, the Caribbean stood proudly as both a frontline region and a source of circular innovation.

Let's continue bridging regional action with global transformation—because Zero Waste isn't just local, it's a driving force in a worldwide movement. The Caribbean is proving that small nations can lead big change!



## BELIZEAN JOHNNY CAKES RECIPE

Here's a traditional Johnny Cakes recipe from Belize, also known as Journey Cakes. These are delicious, dense, biscuit-like breads often served with cheese, beans, or eggs, and are a staple in Belizean breakfasts.

### What you will need:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp white sugar (optional, for a touch of sweetness)
- 2 tbsp vegetable shortening or butter (traditionally lard)
- 1 cup coconut milk (can substitute with water or regular milk)
- Extra flour for kneading

### Instructions:

- 1. Mix Dry Ingredients**  
In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar.
- 2. Cut in Shortening or Butter**  
Add the shortening or butter and use your fingers or a pastry cutter to mix until the mixture is crumbly.
- 3. Add Coconut Milk**  
Slowly add the coconut milk a bit at a time, mixing until a soft dough forms. You might not need the full cup, or you may need a little more depending on the flour and humidity.
- 4. Knead**  
Lightly flour a surface and knead the dough gently for about 2–3 minutes until smooth.
- 5. Rest**  
Cover the dough with a towel or plastic wrap and let it rest for 15–30 minutes.
- 6. Shape**  
Divide dough into 6–8 equal portions. Flatten each into a thick disc about ½ inch thick and 4 inches wide.
- 7. Bake**  
Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place discs on a baking sheet and bake for about 15–20 minutes, or until lightly golden and cooked through.  
(Optional: Some people pan-cook them on a lightly greased griddle for a crispier version.)

### Optional Caribbean Touches:

- *Split and fill with cheese, refried beans, or scrambled eggs.*
- *Serve alongside stew chicken or a Belizean breakfast with fry jacks and plantains.*



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