

Goal of Approach:

USAID climate change support for the countries in the Eastern Caribbean is based on information gathered from stakeholder workshops held in St. Lucia and Barbados in 2010. Two critical areas were identified as requiring special attention: coastal zone management and resilience, and freshwater resources management.

USAID is helping Barbados manage climate change impacts on water, and manage flood risks along the west coast of the island, thereby reducing the risk of loss and damage from flooding. USAID is also working with Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to provide information and capacity building to support adaptation and risk reduction in the region.

Input provided by: United States (USAID/Barbados)

Main elements of the implementation strategy

The program focuses on four component areas which are essential to address specific vulnerabilities related to water and climate resources:

1. Fostering and improving the enabling environment to build understanding and support for policies and laws that reduce vulnerability to climate stresses.
2. Launching interventions in freshwater and coastal management to build resilience and demonstrate results.
3. Building institutional capacity and addressing information gaps through support for key practitioners in government and related sectors affected by climate change as well as support for institutions in the region such as training facilities, government departments and entities charged with developing data.
4. Building public awareness on climate change issues and improving capacities for climate change adaptation.

The program includes the following activities:

Interventions to build resilience and adapt to climate change: USAID funds are supporting high impact “on-the-ground” demonstration activities in the water and coastal management sectors, with relevance for the tourism and agriculture sectors. Planned interventions include:

- Adaptation planning and interventions in coastal communities in Dominica to reduce risks associated with storm surge and flooding.
- Preparation of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan in Grenada to address storm surge and flooding.
- Trainings on water audits to promote water conservation practices in St. Kitts, where saline wedge intrusion threatens freshwater reserves.
- Development of a drainage master plan in Nevis that considers predicted climate change impacts, such as flash flooding.
- Using GIS technologies to map water infrastructure in the northern parts of St. Lucia, and improve water management.
- Establishing water harvesting systems to reduce the risk of water shortages during climatic shocks in St. Vincent.
- Increasing water storage capacity and installing distribution lines for a reverse osmosis plant in Bequia, where freshwater is expected to become increasingly scarce due to sea level rise and increased droughts.

Information strengthening: The OECS Secretariat is working in collaboration with USAID and the Coastal Zone Management Unit – Barbados and Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrogeology (CIMH) to develop an OECS regional marine monitoring and forecasting system.

Building capacity through training, workshops and seminars: A series of seminars is being held by the OECS on areas relating to water and coastal resources, economic sectors, and climate change. These seminars seek to empower

decision-makers and other key interest groups to examine the effects of current management policies, which may be directly contributing to increased vulnerability of natural systems and economic sectors to climate change impacts, and provide guidance on the way forward. In September 2011, a seminar on Integrated Water Resource Management was held. Discussions at this forum led to plans to develop an OECS Water Sector Model Act. A second seminar on coastal area management was held in September 2012 in St Kitts. This resulted in the call for common policies on coastal area management and information access and sharing in the OECS. These policies will be formulated in 2013. In addition, OECS and CIMH are providing training for local monitoring and forecasting practitioners, including a Meteorology Entry level technician course; Meteorology Mid-level technician course; and a Hydrological technician course.

Targeted beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of these projects include local monitoring and forecasting practitioners, decision-makers at all levels, vulnerable communities and coastal residents. The activities help reduce the risk of loss and damage from climate change impacts on coastal communities and important economic sectors such as tourism and agriculture.

Any significant lessons learned

Resource requirements

The program has identified and is currently addressing a number of key capacity needs. Assistance is being provided to strengthen the capacity of technical organizations in areas such as meteorology, coastal and marine science. This will be complemented with the strengthening of training institutions serving the region to increase the cadre of persons at both the technical and decision-making levels to address issues related to climate change.

US support for Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean region totaled \$5 million in fiscal year 2010, \$5.5 million in fiscal year 2011, and \$4.5 million in fiscal year 2012 (http://foreignassistance.gov/Initiative_GCC_2010.aspx?FY=2010).

Potential for replication or scaling-up

The program seeks to build the enabling environment for reducing vulnerability to climate change by improving the regulatory framework in support of national adaptation strategies - demonstration initiatives that can be modeled or used as best practices throughout the region. The "on-the-ground" activities listed above are also intended to serve as demonstration projects that can inform more widespread implementation of risk reduction measures.

Any additional information