

UN CLIMATE CHANGE REGIONAL COLLABORATION CENTER FOR THE CARIBBEAN (RCC ST. GEORGE'S)



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

RCC St. George's
rcstgeorges@unfccc.int

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MESSAGE FROM THE RCC ST. GEORGE'S TEAM

While each passing year is different, 2020 brought all of us enormous and unprecedented challenges. As the year ends, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our internal and external stakeholders for sticking with us despite the challenges. We could not have made it without your support.

The RCC St. George's continued its 7th year under the leadership of Vintura Silva while Isha English, Nakita Francis and Randall Waechter from the WINDREF team continued to manage the RCC Finances. In the middle of the year, the RCC welcomed Ama Kissiwah Boateng and Judlyn Telesford-Checkley into the team as Research Officer and NDC Consultant, respectively. Additionally, 3 Interns namely: Quincy Augustine, Hannah Coutain and Tania Khan joined the team. The new colleagues increased our capacity to support countries in their implementation of climate actions, capacity building, climate finance and revision of Nationally Determined Contributions.

Like many other institutions, as the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated that we stay at home and keep our physical distance, the RCC connected to our stakeholders in the virtual space and we are happy to have effectively engaged everyone in quite several capacity-building workshops.

We are looking forward to a better and successful 2021 together.

**Sincerely,
RCC St. George's Team**



INTRODUCTION

Background

The year 2020, which started as the end of another decade, has been quite a challenging one by all standards. Despite the difficulties presented by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the RCC St. George's continued to offer significant support to Parties, Non-Parties and other Stakeholders and has progressed their activities from previous years with many collaborating institutions and organizations in the fields of mitigation and sustainable development, adaptation, climate finance, facilitating NDC implementation, MRV amongst others.

In 2020, the RCC St. George's continued to support the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and in response to requests from project developers, the RCC provided support to 15 CDM projects. Additionally, Parties received latest developments on the CDM while project developers received tailored technical support for project implementation and use of Certified Emission Reductions (CERs). Further, Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) available on the UN Carbon offset platform was promoted. Second, the work of Caribbean Cooperative MRV Hub expanded as the Hub provided expert trainings, institutional support and mentoring to further enhance country technical work. Additionally, as part of our technical support to countries, the RCC is supporting the implementation of the Needs-based Finance (NBF) project in 4 countries which is aimed to facilitate the mobilization of climate finance to support the needs identified by developing countries regarding the implementation of priority mitigation and adaptation actions, in accordance with the goals outlined in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs) and other relevant policies or strategies. In a similar manner, The Regional Dialogues on Carbon Pricing (RediCAP) have been created based on one of the most important lesson learnt in the last four years of implementing the UNFCCC secretariat's Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Action (CiACA) initiative. The main objective is to provide parties at different stages of adopting carbon pricing instruments both at national and regional level an opportunity to find out more about the benefits, challenges, tools, and best practices directly from the implementers. The work involved in the NDC revision process is often complex and require an arduous amount of effort as the RCC worked with governments to develop ambitious NDCs to meet their commitments to the objectives of the Paris Agreement. This is a commendable effort in tandem with a series of six Caribbean NDC Support Virtual Exchange Dialogues carried out this year, in partnership with other UN Agencies and external partners. Finally, to maintain momentum on the gender action plan, the RCC supported the UNFCCC Secretariat to organize virtual workshop on gender integration into national climate policies, plans, strategies, and actions.

In this report, details of the key achievements in the major areas of work which comprise of support to CDM, development of standardized baselines, transparency, adaptation, climate finance, support to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other cross-cutting areas are presented.

COLLABORATING PARTNERS

The RCC strengthened collaboration with a diverse group of partners in the region to foster dialogues coordination and seek their recommendations on what is needed to speed up climate action and discuss solutions to related challenges faced by the region. New partnerships were also created to make climate actions more efficient and finding synergies. A big very thank you to all our Partners for their contributions!



MITIGATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Standardized Baselines (SBL)

RCC St. George's was tasked with tapping the potential of CDM projects and programs in underrepresented countries in the region, by building their capacities. In 2020, the RCC provided direct technical support to 15 CDM project activities and programs in the region at different stages of the cycle. As a result, 4 CDM projects and Program of Activities (POAs) moved at least one step in the CDM project cycle. In addition, 11 CDM project developers were connected with buyers of Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) shared information on listing CDM projects on the UN Carbon Offset Platform and disseminated potential funding and investors seeking opportunities for CDM project activities. Consequently, 2 standardized baselines namely, Dominican Republic waste SB and Antigua Grid emission factor SB were submitted for approval, and Dominican waste SB received approval from the CDM Executive Board. Further, potential SBLs (GEF SBs in The Bahamas, Cuba, Haiti, Suriname, Dominica, Grenada) had been initiated while work on GEF SBs in Belize, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Vincent and Grenadines.

Table 1: Support to CDM projects in 2020

Substantive support	Any direct project/PoA specific assistance for technical issues, procedural, methodology related, validation, monitoring reports, LoA issuance, clarification request, post registration change, deviation- i.e., any assistance with respect to UNFCCC CDM project cycle process	4
Non-substantive	This constitutes generic support: responding to generic queries, collecting general information, communication with stakeholders for follow-up, surveys, follow-up for New Leads.	3
Other	Matchmaking, Climate Neutral Now, SD Tool, CER buyer support, loan scheme, DOE suggestions, etc.	8
Total		15

Table 2: Support to Standardized Baseline in 2020

SBs	Support from RCC
Dominican Republic waste SB Submitted and approved by CDM Executive Board	The RCC assisted in reviewing the documents and checked the completeness before the DNA formally submitted the SB for approval
Antigua and Barbuda GEF Submitted	

Belize GEF	The RCC supported DNAs for the entire process of the SBs development, including data gathering, calculation, stakeholder consultation, preparation of documents, and submission
Belize transport SB	The RCC supported DNAs including data gathering and calculation
Trinidad and Tobago GEF	
St. Vincent and Grenadines GEF	
St. Kitts and Nevis GEF	

Barbados Million trees program looks to CDM for support

The RCC St. George supported Barbados in launching the 'We Plantin' More Than A Million National Tree Planting Project' as a national initiative to improve climate change mitigation efforts, build sustainability, resilience and food security. The project proponents have expressed interest in being developed as a CDM program of activities through submission of a notice of prior consideration with the support of the RCC St. George's.

Photo 1: Barbados Minister of Environment and National Beautification, Hon. Trevor Prescod, Mr. Ron Goodridge, Officer at the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Mr. Willie Barbour, Senior Project Director, Caribbean Cooperative MRV Hub and Mr. Vintura Silva, RCC St. George's



Supporting the ratification of the Doha Amendment

As a slight refresher, after the amendment was agreed and adopted in 2012, ratifications progressed quite steadily in the initial few years but slowed down considerably in the last couple of years. For example, in 2019 there were only 12 ratifications and as of June 2020, 7 ratifications were still needed to reach the required 144 instruments of ratification ¹.

Then came the final moment – the last 36 hours before 2 October 2020 when two more countries were needed: in football terms one equalizer and one match winning goal. Thanks to Jamaica for the equalizer and to Nigeria for being the decisive country to bring Doha home.

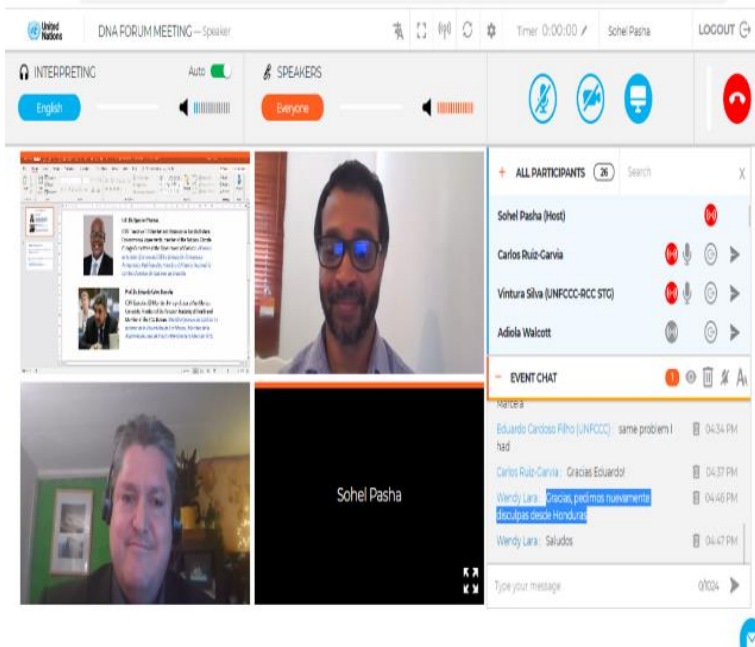
As a support to the intergovernmental process, the RCCs supported Parties in the region either by responding to their ad-hoc requests for relevant information or by collaborating with UNFCCC to follow-up with Parties and updating status of the Doha Amendment ratification process.

Capacity building on Standardized Baselines for Designated National Authorities (DNAs)

The RCC St. George's and RCC Panama co-organized the webinar "Latin America and Caribbean experiences on Standardized Baselines" in English and Spanish language and it took place as a side event to the Regional and Global DNA Forum 2020. There were 29 DNA Representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean who participated in the event. The event was moderated by Mr. Vintura Silva, the Regional Lead for the Caribbean. James Grabert delivered the opening remarks reminding DNAs about the objectives of the event and the usefulness of standardized baselines including the ability to "reduce transaction costs, enhance transparency, objectivity and predictability, facilitate access to the CDM, particularly with regard to underrepresented project types and regions, and scale up the abatement of greenhouse gas emissions." Gajanana Hegde from the UNFCCC Secretariat presented an overview of the Standardized Baselines (SBs) concept and explained the historical context and procedures to develop the SBs, as well as statistics. To take a closer look into the details of standardized baselines, experiences from Latin American and Caribbean countries were shared among the DNAs. Representatives from Belize (Colin Mattis), Dominican Republic (Luz Alcantara), and Honduras (Marcela Madrid & Wendy Lara) all shared various aspects of how they developed their SB (GEF, transport and waste respectively).

¹ <https://unfccc.int/news/ratification-of-multilateral-climate-agreement-gives-boost-to-delivering-agreed-climate-pledges-and>

Photo 2: Regional Leads of RCCs St. George's and Panama moderating a session during the webinar on SBs



Transparency Framework, Monitoring Reporting and Verification (MRV) experiences

To achieve the objective of the Convention, Parties need reliable, transparent and comprehensive information on GHG emissions, climate actions and support. Under the Convention, all Parties are obliged to communicate to the Conference of the Parties (COP) information relevant to the implementation of the Convention (Article 12). By communicating information on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and actions to reduce them, as well as on adaptation and means of implementation such as finance, technology transfer and capacity-building, the transparency and reporting system allows to understand ambition and progress on climate actions and support by Parties, – and informs the COP deliberation and guidance on these matters ². In February 2019, RCC St. George's established a Caribbean Cooperation MRV Hub which should lead to stronger policies to assess and monitor the Caribbean region's contributions to addressing climate change.

Caribbean Cooperative Measuring, Reporting and Verification Hub (CCMRVH)

The CCMRVH is almost mid-way through its five-year mission to support and improve climate change transparency processes in twelve Caribbean countries. Led by the Greenhouse Gas Management Institute and the RCC-STG, the MRV Hub project is ahead of schedule, on budget, and successfully meeting its goals. Our work is proceeding – indeed flourishing – despite the global pandemic. Our Annual Meeting in Barbados was almost cancelled as the virus broke out on the eve of our gathering, but we set up videoconferencing on-the-fly that enabled all in-person and remote attendees to attend and participate in discussions on the MRV Hub's past and future. UNFCCC and UNDP staff joined and participated to help make the meeting a success. Going forward we will continue our training and work despite travel restrictions, using materials and courses designed for remote delivery and on-line learning. We are also facilitating data transfers and file sharing with cloud stored common folders and calendars as we work together.

At the beginning of the year, we launched four work crews on data management systems, on-road mobile sources, forestry and land use change, maritime fuel use and bunker fuel emissions, and data management systems. These were announced through our focal point network and our in-country focal points nominated experts from their countries to join in the work crews. Progress is underway now with training, mentoring, and hands-on work proceeding. The work crews represent one of the ways we can engage multiple countries at once to work together collaboratively on problems and needs identified by country representatives.

Over the summer the Hub held an online Summer Academy attended by twenty-six (26) regional climate change officers from across our member countries. The Summer Academy was originally designed to be an in-person event held over one week, but we changed the format to accommodate the travel

² <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/transparency-and-reporting/the-big-picture/what-is-transparency-and-reporting>

restrictions across the Caribbean, and weekly courses and office hours were held from June 17th to August 5th, 2020. We enjoyed excellent participation and engagement by all learners, and the academy was highly rated by participants. At the conclusion certificates were issued to acknowledge the work and commitment demonstrated by our students.

The work of the MRV Hub is expanding as planned as we have moved from an exclusive focus on GHG emission inventory development to mitigation analysis and MRV systems. To support our growing body of work the MRV Hub has engaged and contracted independent consultants from five countries in the region and we have now hired five full time staff members representing Trinidad and Tobago (Ryan Deosaran), Grenada (Hayden Redhead and Ahyana Bowen), Saint Lucia (Benise Joseph) and Belize (Brittany Meghan). Our latest endeavor is to create the MRV Hub Modeling Centre of Excellence, headed by Vintura Silva and staffed with Dr Donnie Boodlal and Ms Benise Joseph, and supported by the Stockholm Environmental Institute. The MRV Hub Modeling Centre is now supporting mitigation analysis and modeling work in Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia and The Bahamas, and will continue to provide training through the Virtual Exchange series run the RCC-STG.

Over the last year our Steering Committee has grown to include more country representatives and met four times to oversee progress and plan for the establishment of a sustainable institution by 2023, the last year in our IKI grant. After numerous discussions, the Steering Committee voted and agreed to direct the MRV Hub Secretariat to continue pursuit of direct country engagements as a part of the strategy to diversify revenue streams and accelerate the Hub's work. We are now working under direct contracts to support Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia, and these direct engagements will continue to grow in 2021. The Steering Committee has also continued to guide the MRV Hub's path to becoming a sustainable institution and endorsed our plans to create a stand-alone non-profit, based in Grenada, and housed with the RCC-STG at WINDREF.

Webinar on overview of process and provisions for NDCs and Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF)

In September, a webinar on the overview of process and provisions for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) was held by LEDSLAC (Low Emission Development Strategies Latin America and Caribbean), co-organized with UNFCCC/RCC St. George's. This webinar provided an overview of process, provisions, and modalities for NDCs and ETF through presentations from RCC St. George's as well as the transparency division and was attended by over 101 participants from various organizations such as national governments, international organizations, as well as technical or academic institutions. Regarding the ETF, the importance of consistent and accurate estimation of emissions, including emission factors under the consideration of different capacity levels of all countries was emphasized. In the concluding remarks, panelists highlighted the role of the civil society for NDCs, promoting and triggering ambition of NDCs at the national levels and cooperation between governments, and relevant organizations.

Photo 3: Vintura Silva with other Speakers from the UNFCCC Secretariat



RCC St. George's and GIZ teamed up to deliver an online training on how to set up a cooling strategy in the Caribbean context.

The warm tropical climate of the Caribbean makes the use of cooling systems essential, whether it is to keep food fresh or cool down homes and workplaces with air conditioners. Unfortunately, the refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) sector greatly contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to energy inefficient appliances and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) which are commonly used refrigerants that have a high global warming potential (GWP). The RAC sector is an important area to target for the implementation of emission reduction strategies. In fact, by 2030 the cooling sector will account for 13% of global greenhouse gas emissions, illustrating how RAC is one of the key sectors in climate change (Green Cooling Initiative, 2020). To this end, an interactive virtual training was carried out by GIZ Proklima in collaboration with the UNFCCC-RCC/Caribbean Cooperative MRV Hub (CCMRVH). Speakers at the training were Lara Teutsch (GIZ Proklima, Germany), Curlan Bhola (GIZ Proklima, Grenada), Vintura Silva (UNFCCC/CCMRVH), Irene Papst (technical expert at HEAT GmbH, commissioned by GIZ), Leslie Smith (NOU Grenada), and Marco Duran (U4E). The event was facilitated by Julia Schabel and Janna Breitfeld (GIZ Proklima).

Photo 4: List of Speakers at the online training on how to set up a cooling strategy for the Caribbean Region

Speakers



Lara Teutsch
Lara.Teutsch@giz.de
GIZ Proklima Germany
Expert MRV Systems



Curllan Bhola
Curllan.Bhola@giz.de
GIZ Proklima Grenada
Expert MRV Systems



Vintura Silva
VSilva@unfccc.int
Team Lead
UNFCCC RCC



Irene Papst
Irene.Papst@heat-international.de
Consultant HEAT
Expert CO2 Emission Monitoring



Special Guests



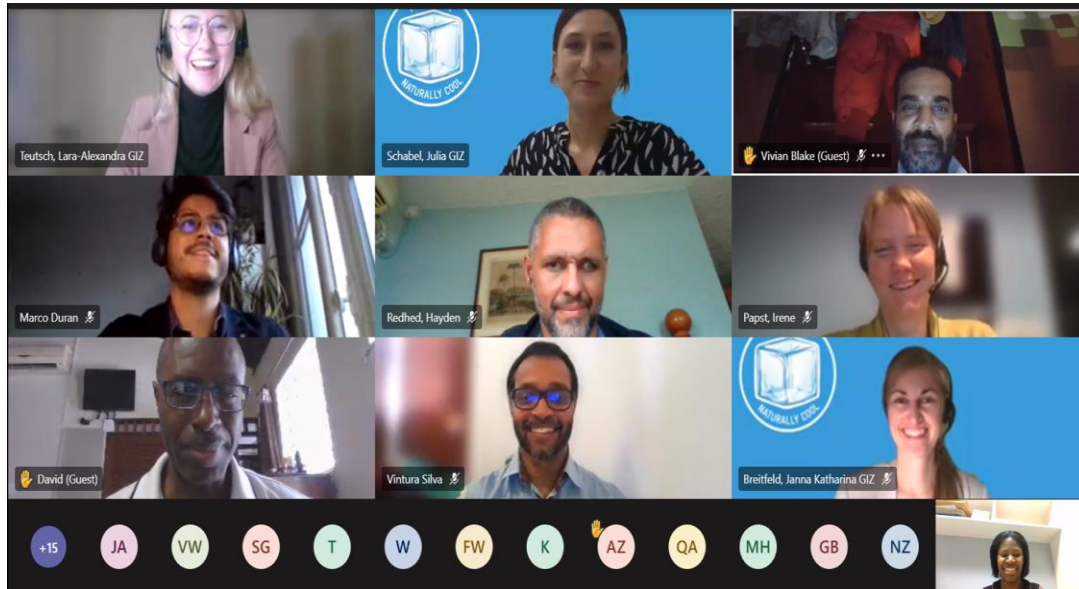
Leslie Smith
smithld31@gmail.com
Coordinator of the National
Ozone Unit in Grenada



Marco Duran
marco.duran@un.org
Energy Efficiency and Cooling Officer
United for Efficiency (U4E)
Global Climate Action Unit



Photo 5: Group picture of participants and speakers after the online training on how to set up a cooling strategy for the Caribbean Region



ADAPTATION

Parties to the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement recognize that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all within the various local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions. It is a key component of the long-term global response to climate change to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems. Parties acknowledge that adaptation actions should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, considering vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions³.

Webinar on ecosystem-based adaptation

A webinar held on 8 April focusing on “mainstreaming Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA) and Gender Equality Social Inclusion into Climate Change Adaptation” was part of the environment and resilience webinar series put on by the OECS and the Adapt’Action/AFD programme. It highlighted the importance of gender equality and social inclusion in the fight towards climate resilience in the region. A panel of professionals introduced a toolkit developed as part of the Adapt’Action funded project to support climate change practitioners and decision-makers to mainstream Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) considerations into the climate change adaptation-related policies, plans, and on-the-ground activities. Vintura Silva of RCC St. George's presented on the status of EbA-GESI issues in the UNFCCC context highlighting gender inclusion in relation to National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

Presentation of Countries National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)

Additionally, organized as part of the NAP Expos⁴, the NAP Country Platform provided a space for developing countries to present their NAP to highlight their adaptation priorities and how they will design implementation. They also share the main lessons learned from their work, how they may promote collaboration with other countries, and how they would monitor progress and effectiveness of their adaptation efforts. The event featured presentation of the NAPs by the countries that have submitted their NAP since the last NAP Country Dialogue that was held in April 2019. As a result, six countries were invited to present their NAPS.

³ <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/what-do-adaptation-to-climate-change-and-climate-resilience-mean>

⁴ <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/workstreams/national-adaptation-plans-naps/nap-expo-0>

Photos 6&7 Sample of flyer and countries that presented at their NAPs



Virtual Islands Summit

This year's Virtual Island Summit was successfully held with support from partners such as the RCC St. George's. The event had over 10,000 attendees and speakers from over 500 island states participating in the seven (7) day virtual event. Discussions were held with speakers from various backgrounds including Heads of State, policymakers, development partners, entrepreneurs, academics and NGO leaders. The sessions included discussions on how island states are implementing the Sustainable Development Goals to meet the needs of future generations, the impact of the global pandemic and other topics aimed at allowing islanders from around the world free access to share ideas, best practices, and solution.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH

St. George’s University Public Health Conference

St. George’s University in Grenada, West Indies held its premier Virtual Public Health Conference in recognition and response to the year 2020 being a significant year for public health. Uniquely positioned to lead a discussion on the conference theme, “Relevance, Creativity, and Innovation in Public Health Education and Practice”, this two-day conference was held in November and in this conference, Ama Kissiwah Boateng, Research Officer from RCC St. George’s presented on how Caribbean countries can build a green and resilient recoveries from the COVID-19 pandemic⁵.

Global Youth network Summit on climate change and health

The Ashley Lashley Foundation as part of the HEY Campaign, in collaboration with UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office and the Children’s Environmental Rights Initiative organized the Global Youth Network Summit on Climate Change and Health. During the session, presentations were delivered by representatives from St George’s University and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) RCC in Grenada. The session focused on presenting early lessons learnt from the COVID-19 Pandemic from and environmental health perspective.

Photo 8: Panelists in the session- covid-19 and the environment, what's next?



⁵<https://app.socio.events/NzEyMw/Projects/97013/Building%20Green%20and%20Resilient%20Recovery%20from%20COVID-19%20in%20the%20Caribbean/693407>

CLIMATE FINANCE

THE UNFCCC Secretariat is developing the Needs-based finance (NBF) project aiming to facilitate the mobilization of climate finance to support the needs identified by developing countries regarding the implementation of priority mitigation and adaptation actions in accordance with the goals outlines in their NDCs, NAPs and other relevant policies and strategies⁶.

Antigua and Barbuda were the first to benefit from this initiative, and the project was implemented by the Department of Environment, as the national focal point for climate change, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance. The project resulted in a report that aims to provide an assessment and overview of Antigua and Barbuda's public and private finance flows relevant to climate change. In doing so, it identified climate-related finance within budget spending and international climate finance receipts. It considers how private actors have engaged with, or are affected by, climate change and surveys the tools available to the Government to make all finance flows more consistent with climate actions. The report acts as a springboard for Antigua and Barbuda, and ongoing projects will continue to refine the methods within, and complement the results of, this report. In addition, it is expected that the NBF project in Belize will be implemented while work in Cuba and Dominican Republic are ongoing.

Regional Dialogues on Carbon Pricing (REdiCAP)

The Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Action (CiACA) workstream of the UNFCCC concluded the first series of Regional dialogues on carbon pricing (REdiCAP) in 5 regions and sub-regions: Latin America, Caribbean, West Africa, East and Southern Africa and South East Asia⁷. The dialogues came at a crucial time with Parties committed to revising their national climate action plans, or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and willing to explore economic instruments to increase their ambition to tackle climate change.

The REdiCAP in the Caribbean was conducted in September and counted on the participation of seasoned negotiators to the COP who led on very engaging discussion for consideration of instruments and evaluated the possibilities to consider regional collaboration. Trinidad and Tobago submitted its formal request to join CiACA and the team in RCC has already identified expertise for conducting the first part of the assessment which will consist of identifying the key elements of the domestic context which may influence the choice of carbon pricing instruments.

To effectively achieve the stated objectives, the REdiCAP dialogues were conducted through an innovative format of discussion to ensure engagement and exchange. The consultations can be held over a two-day period, with Session 1 setting the stage and providing a platform for sharing experience and Session 2 compiling the experience into a potential road map and next steps document.

⁶ <https://unfccc.int/NBF%20Project/Nations#eq-2>

⁷ <https://unfccc.int/news/un-climate-change-fosters-regional-carbon-pricing>

Photo 9: Participants at the Regional dialogues on Carbon Pricing



Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Actions (CiACA)

Under this initiative, the RCC provides technical support to jurisdictions considering adopting carbon pricing instruments under its Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Action. We assist countries in enhancing knowledge on carbon pricing approaches and understand options in a national and regional context for implementing their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

In August this year, the Strategic Steering Committee for the second phase of the initiative presented the preliminary results from the work done interviewing key stakeholders on many aspects to define the Carbon Pricing Instrument Road Map in the Dominican Republic where the recommendations of the second report have been presented to the newly appointed team in the Climate Change Council who has validated the findings and will now proceed to the necessary steps to bring the proposal to policy consideration.

Further, the collaboration between the RCC St. George's, GHGMI and CAEP NDC Partnership in Jamaica has produced a comprehensive and detailed study on opportunities for Jamaica to engage in international markets, considering domestic circumstances and practicable options. In December, a workshop focused on Jamaica and International Carbon markets: opportunities and challenges were held. The objective was to assess the role that international carbon markets could play in helping Jamaica meet the mitigation goals set out in (i) the long-term strategy; and (ii) Jamaica's enhanced and subsequent NDC.

Energy Efficiency and Renewables Conference 2020

The Energy Efficiency and Renewables Conference 2020 was held as a web conference in June which explored the energy situation in the Caribbean and work being done by different Caribbean countries and institutions to support their targets and goals for energy efficiency and clean and renewable energy development. Vintura Silva, the Regional Lead of the RCC presented on the Caribbean Context.

SUPPORT TO NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCS)

In 2020, governments are supposed to communicate updated NDCs which will become the basis for the climate regime under the Paris Agreement, including the enhanced transparency framework (ETF) and the Global Stocktake (GST). In this regard, the RCC St. George's collaborated with the NDC Partnership (NDC-P) to provide technical support to countries (Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, and St. Lucia) on their NDC revision.

The Center also supported St. Kitts and Nevis and Dominica to apply for membership under the NDC Partnership.

In August-September this year, the RCC conducted survey on the status of NDC revision and the challenges hindering countries in the revision process. Two options were made available to respondents: electronic, and telephone interview. Participants represented 15 of the 16 countries supported by the RCC St. George's. Countries were contacted through their UNFCCC National Focal Points. At the time of creation of this report, Barbados had not yet responded. Unless otherwise indicated, there were 19 survey respondents with one individual from each of the 15 islands.

So far, 5 Caribbean countries namely Suriname, Jamaica, Cuba, Grenada, and Dominican Republic have already submitted their updated NDCs to the UNFCCC Secretariat. With the economic impact of Covid-19 on countries, it is anticipated that implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures will be much more challenging.

The Caribbean NDC Support Virtual Exchange Series

As part of its capacity-building support to the Caribbean countries, the RCC St. George's, in collaboration with the Caribbean Cooperative Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Hub (CCMRV-Hub), Regional Pacific NDC Hub, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Inter-American Development Bank (IaDB), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean (OECS) States and several other partners offered a series of virtual exchanges⁸.

from the Pacific and Caribbean regions as part of the Caribbean NDC support Virtual Exchange Platform.

As part of its capacity-building support to the Caribbean countries, the RCC St. George's, RCC Bangkok, and the NDC Partnership team, in collaboration with the Caribbean Cooperative Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Hub (CCMRV-Hub), Regional Pacific NDC Hub, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Inter-American Development Bank (IaDB), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean (OECS) States and several other partners offered a series of virtual exchange sessions for small island developing States (SIDS) from the Pacific and Caribbean regions as part of the Caribbean NDC support Virtual Exchange Platform.

The Caribbean Virtual Exchange Series, which was launched in May 2020, came to an end on October 22, 2020, having spanned a period of 6 months. The series was focused on processes under the Paris Agreement for the preparation and submission of new and updated national climate plans, or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Information shared via the virtual platform provided guidance on how

⁸ <https://unfccc.int/about-us/regional-collaboration-centres/rcc-st-george/22-october-2020-round-up-of-the-caribbean-virtual-exchange-series>

to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (ICTU) for NDCs between representatives from Caribbean countries, international and regional partners supporting these countries, and the consultants and technical specialists working in the region on NDCs.

The Caribbean region is confronted with the serious challenge of climate change. As a result, its forty million residents are exposed to increased vulnerability from exasperated changing weather patterns. In light of this, and although having a relatively negligible contribution to global GHG emissions, the Countries of the region seek to communicate their new and update National Determined contributions. In support of this effort, the RCC St. George's/ Caribbean Cooperative Monitoring Reporting and Verification Hub together with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) partnership, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), United Nations Development Project (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IaDB) and several other partners, launched the 6-part Caribbean Virtual Exchange Series, geared towards enhancing the technical capacities of experts from the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS, who are in the process of preparing new or updated NDCs, due by the end of 2020.

In May 2020, the series kicked off with a webinar on the NDC Submission process, and the ITCU Process, which focused on introducing the ACP tool. The session provided hands-on training for the Katowice guidance on information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (ICTU) for NDCs, and presented a country example from Singapore. The exchange was attended by 112 representatives from Caribbean countries, international partners supporting the countries and consultants working in the region on Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

The second and third leg of the series were both held in July 2020. The first introduced the key outcomes of the Placencia Ambition Forum on integrating Adaptation, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction, familiarizing participants with the Adaptation, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction priorities and options across the Caribbean in specific areas, and how these elements can be integrated into NDCs - specifically Water security, Agriculture and Forestry, Infrastructure, Land Degradation, and Nature Based solutions. The second forum in July highlighted the process of Linking Sustainable Development and NDCs. By selecting specific sustainability topics in the NDC revision/update - namely Gender mainstreaming, Social Inclusiveness, Health, Youth, Children and Education - the session introduced participants to the best practices on linking national SDG activities and Sustainable development strategies within NDCs.

The fourth session, held in August 2020, was entitled “Accounting and Tracking Progress for NDCs Webinar”. It provided an overview of available tools, approaches and methodologies of accounting and tracking progress of NDCs under the ETF and shared from experiences in designing systems in the region. In September, the fifth Caribbean NDC Virtual Exchange aimed at enhancing technical capacities of experts from the Caribbean and Pacific SIDS who are in the process of preparing their new or updated NDCs in line with provisions relevant for preparation, communication, accounting and tracking of NDCs.

In October, the Costing and Financing of NDCs and tracking of Climate Finance webinar, zoned in on Finance strategy/plans for NDCs, and provided key updates on its implementation and support for accessing climate finance. Hosting a total of 95 representatives from Caribbean countries and other invited International partners.

The sixth (6th) and final exchange was aimed at providing a platform for supporting NDC revision and implementation, with target audiences encompassing government representatives together with international and regional organizations and their consultants and technical specialists. The session

covered topics relating to Costing and reporting for NDC, Tracking of Climate finance flows and reporting and Finance strategies/plan for NDC implementation. The session also had presentation of country experiences from Suriname and Chile.

Overall, the series provided participants with a robust overview of the different aspects of NDCs, providing technical expertise and experience sharing to aid NDC partner membership countries to accelerate their NDC implementation at scale. All participants were also introduced to key tools and methods that can be used for effective planning and implementation of their NDCs. This will aid countries to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement to mitigate climate change and enhance adaptation. RCC St. George's will continue to support countries in finalizing the revision/update of their NDCs as well as implementation partners.

Photo 10: List of Collaborating Partners RCC St. George's worked with in organizing the Virtual Exchange series

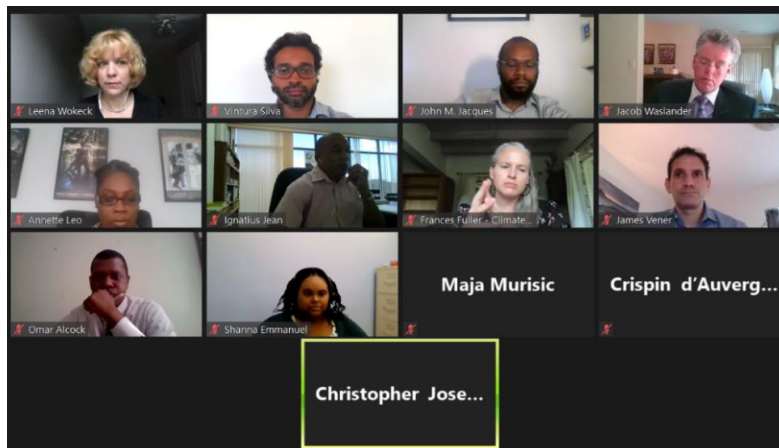


Webinar on Caribbean NDC Revision

On 23 July, The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), as part of Caribbean NDC Finance Initiative (NDCFI) hosted a webinar entitled Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Revision: Where Are We? Other objectives of the webinar included:

- Allowing Caribbean states to share their progress and experiences in the revision of their respective NDCs.
- Obtaining an indication of what will be contained in the new NDCs.
- Facilitating the sharing of lessons learned, challenges and best practice which may be of benefit to countries that are less advanced in the revision process or for future NDCs.
- Providing stakeholders and prospective partners with an indication of the needs and opportunities for engagement and support that will be required to successfully implement the new NDCs.
- Allowing development partners to share experiences and areas of potential support available to countries
- for revision and implementation activities.

Photo 11: Vintura Silva together with other panelists in the webinar on Caribbean NDC Revision



2-day virtual event on advancing the Energy Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean through (NDCs)

RCC St. George's and RCC Panama, in collaboration with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) hosted a two-day webinar, entitled: 'Advancing the Energy Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)'. The event was presented as a forum for regional discussion on raising the ambition of the national climate pledges in the lead up to COP 26, through enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and exploring in particular the key role this plays in Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries' energy transitions and economic recoveries from COVID-19. The first day of the webinar explored key drivers behind the NDC enhancement measures undertaken by countries across the region and provided a better understanding of the process followed in elaborating their NDCs, including challenges and opportunities, towards the submission in 2020; while day two of the meeting delved into the potential instruments of support for countries towards the NDC implementation once the national commitments are revised and submitted.

Photo 12: High-level Panelists in the opening session of the webinar on advancing the energy transition in LAC through NDCs



Welcoming Remarks



Francesco La Camera
Director-General
IRENA



H.E. Fiona Clouder
Ambassador for Latin America
& Caribbean
UK COP26



James Grabert
Director, Mitigation
Division,
UNFCCC

Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Energy week

This year's edition of the Energy Week organized by OLADE and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), was held virtually in November. The Energy Week provided a platform for the exchange of experiences and knowledge of the energy sector, through the generation of business opportunities and project financing, bringing together high authorities from the sector, representatives of the governments of the 27 Member Countries of the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE). During this session, Mr. Vintura Silva from RCC St. George presented on the importance of the appropriate management of energy statistics and having a national energy information system adapted to the specific energy matrix of the countries within the Caribbean Region.

Photo 13: Vintura Silva with other in one of the sessions during the LAC energy week

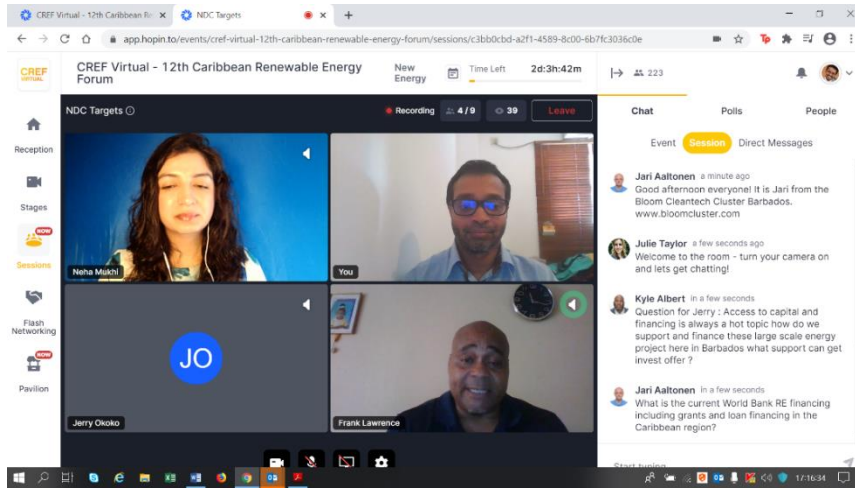


Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum (CREF)

The 12th Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum took place in October and Vintura Silva from the RCC St. George's was one of the Panelists. In 2020 Caribbean countries are working towards updating their Nationally Determined Contributions to be more ambitious towards meeting Paris Agreement long term goals (which communicates targets towards GHG emission reduction to be achieved by 2030). Majority of these targets are planned to be achieved through energy efficiency and renewable energy. For the Caribbean governments overwhelmed by COVID-19 achieving these targets alone, poses a formidable challenge, that cannot be done without the engagement of the private sector.

This idea Exchange focused on understanding, how the private sector project developers, technology suppliers and investors follow and interpret the commitments in NDCs, what opportunities, challenges they foresee to engage with the governments in meeting these targets and what more needs to be done in order to facilitate the private sector engagement.

Photo 14: Vintura Silva with other Panelists in the virtual forum



GENDER AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Virtual workshop to explore best practices from countries in LAC in integrating Gender into their National Climate Actions

The RCC has worked consistently in coordination with the Gender Team at the secretariat to ensure that special attention was given to ensure equal participation in capacity training activities, workshops and seminars organized by the RCCs in collaboration with partners. The focus of gender work at RCCs level was developed in line with the Enhanced Lima Work Plan Gender (LWPG) and its Gender Action Plan (GAP) agreed at COP 25 (Decision 3/CP.25)

Over 300 participants from 35 countries registered for the third regional workshop on integrating gender into national climate actions, held online on 16 September 2020 (read more about the 5-event series). The event provided the opportunity to hear from leading countries and enable peer-to-peer exchange on the best practices and challenges that governments face in integrating gender into national climate policies, plans, strategies, and actions.

The workshop was co-organized by the secretariat's gender team, the Regional Collaboration Centers in Panama and St. George, and UNDP. Members from Panama's Youth Climate Change organization provided valuable assistance. Through this collaboration, we were able to leverage regional expertise and relationships to secure key speakers and promote the event through regional networks.

Participants heard from Party representatives and observers about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming to enhance climate action; gender data and analysis; institutional arrangements; as well as policy alignment and coherence measures. Speakers included country representatives from Mexico, Uruguay, Jamaica, Chile, Canada, Santa Lucia, Saint Vincent, and the Grenadines, and representatives from organizations such as EmpoderaClima, FLASCO, and UNDP.

Photo 15: Participants from the virtual workshop on gender integration into national climate policies



8th ACE dialogues for Action for Climate Empowerment

Other regional events supported by the Regional Collaboration Centres (RCCs) - in St. George's for the Caribbean and in Panama for Latin America - include the Empowerment, Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) denotes work under Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement (2015) and their six elements: Climate Change Education, Training, Public Awareness, Public Access to Information, Public Participation, and International Cooperation on these issues. Implementation of all six elements has increasingly been recognized as crucial in solving the complex challenges presented by climate change. This is also reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (for example SDG targets 4.7 and 13.3) to which the ACE agenda is closely related

World Youth Day 2020: Joint Call for Climate Action

On World Youth Day, which is less than one year prior to the opening of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in July 2021, and during the Covid-19 pandemic, RCC St. George's is partnered with UNICEF, The Ashley Lashley Foundation, Special Olympics and others in the Region to promote young athletes within the sports community to take further action to protect human health and our environment in the face of climate change. All athletes under 30 years of age to share a pledge to adopt lifestyles that are both healthy and environmentally friendly and support the sports community in playing a lead role in advocacy efforts towards the acceleration of climate action at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Photo 16: list of organizing Partners for world youth day in the Caribbean



OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Support to Academic Institutions

RCC St. George's work in the region for 2020, also included collaborating with Universities - namely the University of Trinidad and Tobago, and the University of the West Indies. The Centre worked along with University of Trinidad and Tobago to develop a course module on Sustainable Energy Analysis and Policy, for students pursuing a Master of Science degree in Energy Engineering with a specialisation in Renewable Energy. At the same time also a Policy brief on "the effects of COVID-19 and climate change in the Caribbean context" was developed and submitted for publication at the University of West Indies, Cave Hill Campus Department of Government, Sociology, Social work and Psychology.

RCC Virtual Global forum

UN Climate Change Regional Collaboration Centre (RCC) leadership, steering committees of the secretariat and institutions that host the RCCs, and other regional partners met recently at the RCC Global Forum 2020 to exchange views, share progress on ongoing activities and identify emerging priorities and issues related to climate action for continued regional support. Given the impacts of the global pandemic, the RCC Global Forum 2020 was held virtually and was hosted by the UNFCCC-WGEO Regional Collaboration Centre for Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (RCC Dubai). In an acknowledgement of the important work the RCCs are doing to facilitate climate action regionally, the Forum was very well attended with the participation of 75 individuals from a very diverse community of stakeholders, representing 30 entities that included the RCC host partners, UN agencies, international institutions, regional bodies and government representatives⁹. In their presentations, the six RCCs shared a staggering number of achievements enabled through virtual workshops, engagements, collaborations, meetings and activities in 2020. The achievements highlight activities related to addressing alignment of climate mitigation and adaptation plans with national sustainable development plans, support to Article 6, adaptation, capacity building on transparency and facilitating the mobilization of climate-aligned finance.

⁹ <https://unfccc.int/about-us/regional-collaboration-centres/rcc-highlights/regional-collaboration-centres-global-forum>

COMMUNICATION OF RCC ACTIVITIES

The RCC St. George's has increased its communication efforts by regularly disseminating newsletters and publishing them on the website. The newsletters provide technical advice, inform readers on relevant events, facilitate cooperation, and promote opportunities for project funding. Additionally, the RCC St. George's Website has been revamped, it is accessible to the public at <https://unfccc.int/about-us/regional-collaboration-centres/rcstgeorges>.

The website offers a wide range of information from brochures, newsletters, past and upcoming events. A total of 5 newsletters and 14 news articles were published on the website in the year.

Photo 17: Samples of RCC St. George's newsletters

