

Caribbean climate experts: SIDS Must Embrace a Just Transition

Antigua and Barbuda highlights plans and urges other vulnerable islands to move to a more inclusive, green economy.

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Globally, the clean energy sector is growing exponentially with clean energy employment surpassing that of fossil fuels in 2021, according to the IEA World Energy Report 2023. This presents significant opportunities for small island developing states, and climate policy experts are calling for the Caribbean region to get ahead of the curve on a just transition. Antigua and Barbuda in particular is taking a cogent approach and laid out a clear just transition pathway in its national climate change plans.



Ms. Ezra Christopher

At the Climate Analytics Caribbean session, “A Just Transition: Empowering inclusive climate action for the Caribbean” on March 12th, Ms. Ezra Christopher, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Department of

Environment, noted, *"The Government of Antigua and Barbuda places tremendous weight on achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement through its gender-responsive transition to a low emission, climate resilient economy."*

"Given the risks Antigua and Barbuda faces and its vulnerability to climate trends, the country is highly motivated to embrace an energy transition," said Ms. Christopher. *"Antigua and Barbuda has been strategic in how it has used its Readiness Support from multilateral climate funds and technical assistance from such partners like the NDC Partnership and Climate Analytics to support its long-term strategic vision for climate action, enhancing capacities and strengthening enabling environments to translate its climate change priorities into investment plans."*

"We have aligned key technical assistance to our country's Readiness Preparatory Support Programme with the Green Climate Fund to support us in investment planning, implementation and in upscaling. This support was instrumental in developing our climate strategies, advancing implementation of our NDCs, and developing projects."

Ms. Christopher highlighted the following key pillars of Antigua and Barbuda's just transition advancement:

- Seek to drive the transformation of sectors and creation of jobs,
- Build the entrepreneurial capacity of women, youth, and micro, small and medium enterprises,
- Provide education, training, and certification programmes for the workforce in mitigation and adaptation technologies,
- Develop and integrate specialist programmes into existing educational institutions,
- Involve multi-stakeholder consultations and social dialogues,
- Promote economic diversification by providing new and innovative job opportunities,
- Encourage participation of both men and women in just transition initiatives, and
- Establish a Just Transition Framework for monitoring, and reporting on progress of the transition process.

Ms. Christopher was joined by Climate Analytics Caribbean's Climate Diplomacy Advisor, Ms. Kristin Qui, and Climate Policy Advisor, Mr. Carlon Mendoza.

Mr. Mendoza shed light on the seminal Just Transition Work Programme, which was agreed at the international climate change summit, COP28, noting this is a prime opportunity for a focus to be placed on how small island developing states (SIDS) will be impacted through the global just transition.

"Antigua and Barbuda has already started thinking about just transition and how that will flow into policy. Along with the ratification of Escazú Agreement, this just transition work programme can provide a setting point and guidance. The decisions taken at the international level are agreed by consensus and will inform countries' policies and legislation. This facilitates a holistic approach to ensure no one is left behind."

Closing the session was Ms. Christine Samwaroo, Founder of the Breadfruit Collective, a gender and environmental justice NGO in Guyana.

"We need to urgently rethink our relationship with the environment and vulnerable groups like women and girls because they tend to suffer the most from the climate crisis. When we think of a just transition for the Caribbean, it is fair and rights based, it is common sense solutions that already exist in our islands. A just transition must look at the good of the community rather than a few individuals who benefit at the top. Gender equity and protecting the environment is linked to safeguarding a future that is safe, just, sustainable, and equitable for everyone."

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About Climate Analytics Caribbean:

Climate Analytics was formed in 2008 to help achieve a climate-safe, sustainable future for all.

We deliver cutting-edge science analysis and support to accelerate climate action to limit warming below 1.5°C. Our work empowers countries, communities, and peoples on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

Climate Analytics Caribbean is based in Trinidad and Tobago and aims to significantly augment the scientifically informed, knowledge-based resources which Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the region require to effectively counter the effects of climate change.

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