



**Organisation of
Eastern Caribbean States**



THE GREEN LINK

**INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY:
A CLOSE UP LOOK OF MARIA ISLAND**

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*La Soufriere Volcano, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Photo by: Danny Moonie*

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Patricia-Ann Wardrope, Editor

The OECS Commission's Sustainable Energy Unit successfully convened its inaugural meeting with the OECS Council of Ministers with responsibility for Energy on August 19, 2022, under the theme: Accelerating our Energy Security for Continued Growth and Resilience. Look out for our next edition of GreenLink for more insights on activities and exciting events!

Don't forget to reach out to us at greenlink@oecs.int, if you would like to share any activities taking place in your part of our OECS space.

Hello Readers,
Another edition of GreenLink is hot off the press, and we are overly eager to update you on what has taken place since our last edition.

Here, we highlight activities held in observance of International Biodiversity Day and World Environment Day, a visit by the European Union Delegation to Saint Lucia, key takeaways from the 2nd Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions Finance Initiative (NDCFI) hosted by the OECS Commission in collaboration with the Government of Saint Lucia, among others. Look out for some amazing photographs from a regional photo competition on Resilient Caribbean Cities, and information on key outcomes from the 9th OECS Council of Ministers of Environmental Sustainability meeting (COM-ES 09) held in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

This meeting included an interactive exhibition that was open to the general public. Students in St. Vincent & the Grenadines were particularly engaged in some exciting virtual reality educational videos, and we have shared with you some photo highlights.



*Broad Winged Hawk
Photo by Danny Moonie*





The Biodiversity Support Programme for ACP Small Island Developing States and Coastal Environments (BioSPACE) is funded by the European Union



*St. Lucia Whiptail (Male) on Maria Island
Photo by Danny Moonie*

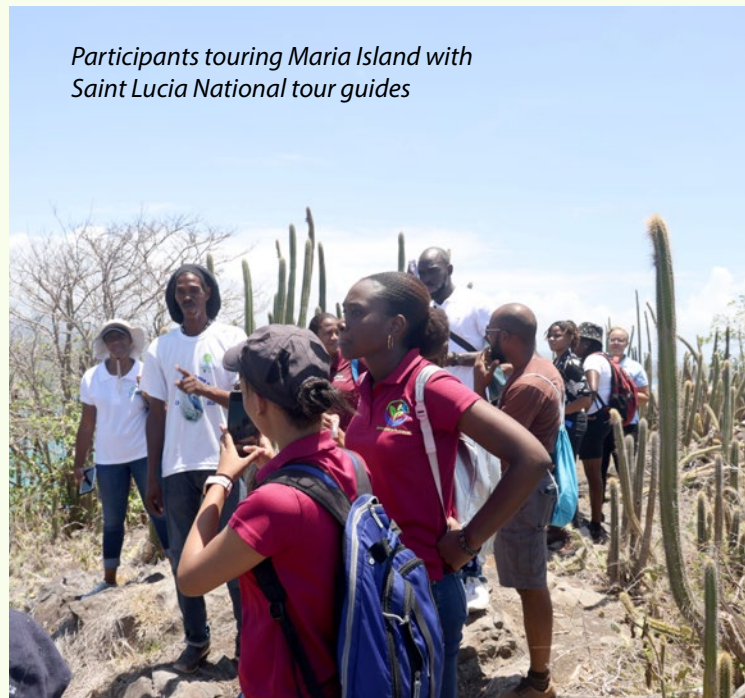
International Day for Biological Diversity - A Closer look at Biodiversity on Maria Island

The recognition of International Day for Biological Diversity, ever since it was sanctioned in 1993 by the United Nations for the promotion of biodiversity issues, has helped to create a greater appreciation globally for biodiversity, and brings to the fore the importance of its conservation.

In recognition of International Day for Biological Diversity on May 22, 2022, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States planned a visit to Maria Island in Saint Lucia, a biodiversity hotspot, in collaboration with the Department of Forestry in Saint Lucia and the Saint Lucia National Trust. Representatives on island from Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Fauna and Flora International were also present. A brief video documentary of the experience was created, which can be viewed here.

"The theme for International Biodiversity Day this year - Building a shared future for all life - reminds us that our future as a regional community depends on our ability

*Participants touring Maria Island with
Saint Lucia National tour guides*



to come together and support each other on shared aspirations, common positions and joint actions, toward a healthy and productive environment, for the well-being and sustainable development of the Eastern Caribbean, [fully cognizant that we may go fast alone but always go further together].” – Chamberlain Emmanuel, Head, Environmental Sustainability Division, OECS –

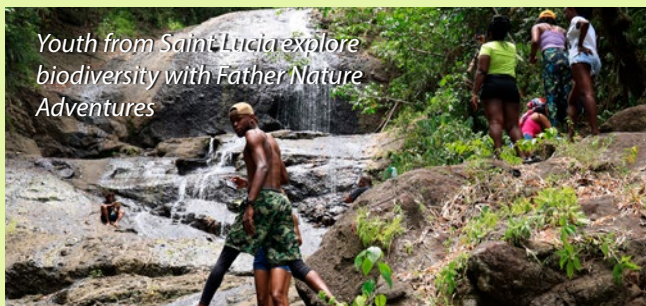
The activity was sponsored by the BioSPACE project, which is funded by the European Union and seeks to conserve coastal and marine biodiversity in OECS Member States. This Support Programme was developed to contribute to the sustainable development of ACP Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and coastal countries, while at the same time supporting efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The programme aims to contribute to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway by supporting and improving the management and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources. Celebrate our biodiversity!



International Day for Biological Diversity - Appreciating Biodiversity with Father Nature Adventures

In observance of International Biodiversity Day on May 22, 2022, the OECS Environmental Sustainability Division through the BioSPACE Project funded by the European Union, contracted a Saint Lucian company, Father Nature Adventures, to conduct a public engagement activity with a youth group in Saint Lucia to help develop a greater appreciation for marine and terrestrial biodiversity. The group visited a waterfall in Anse la Raye, and afterwards, snorkeled at Anse Cochon, a prime snorkeling spot on island.

The BioSPACE Programme was developed to contribute to the sustainable development of ACP Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and coastal countries, while at the same time supporting efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).





CYEN members and students from the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Environmental Club at Grand Anse Beach clean-up in Saint Lucia

International Day for Biological Diversity - Grand Anse Beach Clean-up

In recognition of International Biodiversity Day 2022, the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN), and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College Environmental Club, hosted a beach clean-up of the Grand Anse beach in Saint Lucia. The activity was sponsored by the EU funded BioSPACE Project. Below are photographic highlights of the event.





Left to Right: Crispin d’Auvergne, Programme Director, Climate and Disaster Resilience Unit, OECS, Hon. Carlos James, Environment Minister, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. Didacus Jules, OECS Director General

OECS HOSTS

9TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



Left to Right: Aria St. Louis, Grenada, and Yasa Belmar, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Left to Right: Susan Lyis, ICCF, Robert Agbede, CEO, Chester Group, representative, Chester Group, Bogdan Stefanescu, European Union Delegation



Left to Right: Crispin d’Auvergne, Programme Director, Climate and Disaster Resilience, OECS, David Robin, Programme Director, Oceans Governance, OECS

The Council of Ministers with responsibility for Environmental Sustainability in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) convened its ninth meeting (COM:ES 09) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines from May 31 to June 2, 2022. The meeting was held under the theme “Shifting to more Integrated Approaches for Sustainability, Resilience and Prosperity in OECS SIDS”.

The hybrid plenary sessions were attended by relevant Ministers and their technical delegations from the 11 OECS Member States, along with invited (regional and international) participants from development partners, the private sector, and civil society, who joined in person and virtually.

Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the OECS, paid tribute to the outgoing Chair, St. Kitts and Nevis, and welcomed the incoming Chair, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. While lamenting the “unprecedented disruption and distress from a COVID pandemic, a volcanic eruption, and geopolitical events,” and noting the continued vulnerability and anxiety of OECS SIDS on the eve of another hurricane season, Dr. Jules also acknowledged the “unparalleled opportunities for innovation and transformation ...” that the region must grapple with.

The Chair, Hon. Carlos James, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, citing the recent IPCC



Hon. Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines



Donna Gittens, Susana Fuentes, European Union

reports, and the implications for SIDS, reiterated the call for larger countries to step up in Climate ambition and action. The other Member States called out the global community for the disproportionate urgency demonstrated and financing invested in dealing with the conflict in Europe, while Small Island Developing States continue to struggle on the frontlines of a climate change war zone with very little to show in terms of the speed and size of resources from the polluters.

The Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, in his feature address at the cocktail ceremony, highlighted the struggle of OECS Member States, using the scenario of the recent volcanic eruption coupled with parallel crises, and the injustice of mounting debt to deal with recovery, mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. He lamented,

“Some 40% of our Capital expenditure is spent on addressing issues touching on [climate change], land degradation and biodiversity - money that has to be borrowed.”

He also expressed gratitude to the OECS and CARICOM countries and institutions for the support provided to St. Vincent and the Grenadines during and post the volcanic eruption.

Several policy papers and frameworks were considered and deliberated by Ministers to help set and advance harmonized approaches to key challenges and opportunities. These included: an OECS Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for civil society and the private sector; a Regional Action Framework for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM); an OECS Strategy and Action Plan for Ship and Land-Based Generated Waste; a Research Agenda, Strategy and Action Plan for Terrestrial and Marine Biological Resources; and a Needs-based Finance (NBF) Strategy for access to and mobilization of climate finance.

Ministers were also apprised of upcoming and ongoing regional initiatives designed to support

identified needs and priorities, such as the second NDC Investment Forum from July 5-7, 2022 (Visit <https://ndcfi.oecs.org/2nd-ndc-investment-forum/> for details); Regulatory Support for Renewable Energy Transition in the OECS; Geothermal Energy Capacity Building for Utilization, Investment and Local Development (GEOBUILD); the UNESCO initiative for scientific cooperation; Cooperation for the Adoption and the Promotion of the Circular Economy in Caribbean Businesses (CAVEC); and the Sargassum Algae Control Cooperation Program (SARG'COOP).

At a closed Caucus session, Ministers deliberated on preparations for key upcoming fora such as the 103rd meeting of CARICOM Council on Trade and Environment (COTED), the UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP 27), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15) and the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Ministers gave special consideration to strategies and actions for collectively addressing bottlenecks and opportunities related to climate finance, and agreed on key priorities and other matters for advancing the operationalisation of the Eastern Caribbean Conservation Caucus in collaboration with the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF).

At the closing of the COM:ES 09, Ministers received and welcomed an intervention from the Virgin Islands, through Special Envoy for the Premier's Office, Benito Wheatley, who expressed deep gratitude to the region, including sister OECS Member States and the Commission, for their strong expressions of support amid the threat of consideration of direct rule by the United Kingdom (UK). Special Envoy Wheatley was particularly grateful for the offers of assistance to help strengthen institutions and systems of Government in the Virgin Islands, stating that democracy must not be seen as a problem but as an important part of the solution. The meeting reiterated strong support for the Virgin Islands and applauded the bi-partisan steps taken in their quest to ensure they retained their level of autonomy and dignity.



Highlights of

Environmental Sustainability Exhibition Curator's House, Botanical Gardens in New Montrose, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

During the OECS 9th Council of Ministers on Environmental Sustainability (COM:ES 09), the OECS Environmental Sustainability Division in partnership with St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture, hosted an Environmental Sustainability exhibition at Curator's House, Botanical Gardens in New Montrose, St. Vincent. The exhibition was themed, "Shifting to more integrated approaches for Sustainability, Resilience and Prosperity in OECS SIDS." The exhibits focused on the following thematic areas:

- Climate Change and coastal impacts
- Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management
- OECS vulnerabilities to climate change
- Climate Change and natural disasters – Disaster Risk Management
- Sustainable Energy as a Climate Change adaptation measure
- Ocean Governance and Fisheries a Climate Change adaptation measure
- How human practices compound the impacts of climate change
- Social and health impacts of climate change
- Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change (HMCCC)

The exhibition ran from May 31 – June 2, 2022. At the official opening ceremony, OECS Director General Dr. Didacus Jules, and Director of Sustainable Development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Janeel Miller-Findlay, cut the ribbons to formally open the exhibition.



OECS Director General, Dr. Didacus Jules, making opening remarks at the exhibition

During the 3-day event, hundreds of visitors, including 675 students from 19 Vincentian schools – both primary and secondary – participated in interactive displays, viewed educational videos on the conservation of marine and terrestrial resources, and climate change. They received giveaway items, flyers, and informational brochures on the need for environmental sustainability in the OECS.

The attractions at the exhibition included:

1

A live ecosystem display - The display contained fish and birds where visiting students interacted with it and had the opportunity to ask questions.

2

A Virtual Reality experience – Through the Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project (CROP) funded by the World Bank, the OECS Environmental Sustainability Division developed a 3D virtual reality video to educate persons on marine life and resources, their importance to our survival and the need to conserve them. Several visitors experienced the virtual tour, gaining a deeper knowledge and appreciation of ocean resources, their economic and social benefits, and the need to protect them.

3

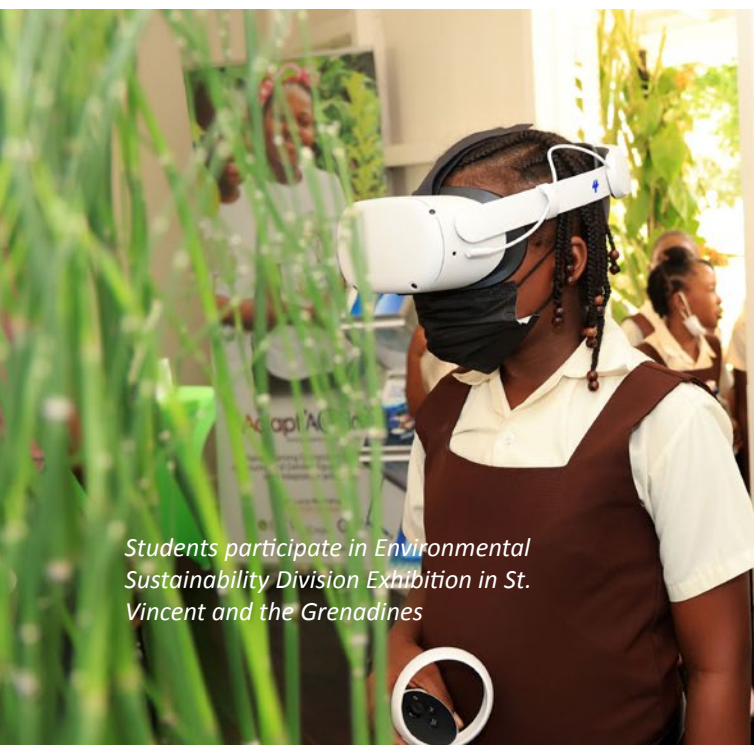
A Climate Change Display – The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) has partnered with the OECS to execute the Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change Project (HMCCC). The exhibits focused on how Climate Change is causing more severe natural disasters and how it these events are affecting the lives and livelihoods of people in Small Island Developing States. It also educated persons on steps that could be taken to mitigate the disaster vulnerability. This exhibit consisted of brochures, giveaway items, photographic displays, and educational videos. Copies of the book, Hazards, Disasters and Climate Change, developed by the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility, CCRIF, for children ages 8-12 were also distributed to visiting school children.

4

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture OECS Environmental Sustainability, and the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority Interactive Display – Personnel from these two entities created an interactive set-up in the form of a game that educated visitors on the efforts of environmental conservation in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and their importance to the nation.

The exhibition was well received by the visitors from the Vincentian public, especially students from the visiting schools.





Students participate in Environmental Sustainability Division Exhibition in St. Vincent and the Grenadines



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



St. Vincent and the Grenadines rebuilds from the ashes of the La Soufrière Volcanic Eruption

During the 9th Council of Ministers on Environmental Sustainability held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority gave the Meeting delegates a tour of the Leeward coast of mainland St. Vincent.

Delegates were able to see first-hand the damage caused by the catastrophic La Soufrière volcanic eruption in 2021, but also witnessed the strides made by the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Government with the help of regional and international partners to recover and rebuild, while protecting the environment and charting the future.

The OECS Commission's Environmental Sustainability Division documented the tour as part of its observance of World Environment Day on June 6, 2022. View the video by clicking on the link to the right.



VIEW VIDEO



30 SECONDS OF CALM

30 SECONDS OF CALM BOUGHT TO YOU COMPLIMENTS THE ENVIRONMENT DIVISION, GOVERNMENT OF GRENADA





EU delegation representatives, Donna Gittens, Susana Fuertes and Jose Legarra meet with Adrian Medard, WASCO Senior Laboratory Technician, and OECS Technical Specialist, Farzana Yusuf Leon

EU DELEGATION VISITS CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE PROJECT SITES IN SAINT LUCIA

The European Economic Community, EEC, came into being when the Treaty of Rome was signed on March 25, 1957. The “European Union” officially replaced the EEC in 1992 with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, and ever since its formation, has been a friend and partner of the Caribbean Region, and contributing significantly to enhancing the livelihoods of its people. Currently, through the 11th European Development Fund (11th EDF), several major projects in the Region are ongoing.

During April 26–28, an EU delegation concluded a mission to Saint Lucia which included meetings with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), officials from the Government of Saint Lucia, and national implementing agencies. Delegates conducted site visits to several ongoing EU-funded Climate Change and Disaster Resilience projects and proposed sites for Ecosystem-based approaches and sustainable livelihoods initiatives, many of which are

being undertaken in partnership with the OECS. The delegation comprised Jose Legarra, Project Manager for Environment, Biodiversity and Infrastructure, Susanna Fuertes Project Manager for Climate Change, and Donna Gittens, Project Manager for Climate Change.

They visited three rural communities and the Saint Lucia Met Office, which are beneficiaries of an EU-funded, four-year €12-million project, which aims to strengthen the Climate Risk Management Framework in the 16 CARIFORUM member countries. The project activities are being executed in partnership with the OECS and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). The first visit was to the Vanard water intake, where a watershed management, protection, and infrastructure upgrade is being undertaken. These upgrades will address water shortages and distribution in Vanard and its surrounding communities.





Praslin Bay, Saint Lucia

Community resident and farmer, Mary Emelyn Charles, is optimistic about its prospects. Speaking during the site visit, she said, "I hope we get more water and better quality because we will have enough coming from that area."

The second visit was to the community of Des Barras, where an upgrade to the water treatment facility and water treatment process is being made. This facility will operate using renewable energy technology. The third was to the Plain View Combined School in La Retraite, Vieux Fort, where infrastructure will be put in place to improve water availability at the educational institution. During the visit to the Saint Lucia Met Office, delegates saw first-hand the aged meteorological equipment that will be replaced with new modern ones.

Other site visits included touring the Anse-la-Raye Village mangrove area and the Praslin Bay, which will be beneficiaries of the Biodiversity Support for ACP

Coastal Environments (BioSPACE) Project – another EU funded project being executed in nine OECS Member States. The implementors of the project are exploring the possibility of making the Anse-la-Raye mangrove area a place to demonstrate effective ecosystem management, to serve as a tourist attraction, and contribute to the livelihoods of community residents. For the Praslin community, a sargassum digester is being built nearby to deal with the huge influx of sargassum currently affecting both the health and livelihoods of the small fishing community.

A visit was made to the Fond St. Jacques community in Soufriere, where a meeting and site demonstration were conducted for a project activity financed through the Integrated Landscape Approaches and Investments in Sustainable Land Management Project



Vanard Water Intake, Saint Lucia

in the OECS – another EU funded project being executed in nine OECS Member States. The initiative in Fond St. Jacques seeks to enhance capacities to improve land-use management, reverse land degradation and ecosystem loss, specifically forests.

The delegation also visited other EU funded projects being executed in partnership with the Government of Saint Lucia, including the Vanard to Anse-la-Raye link road reconstruction project, the Piaye bridge project, and the Dennery Water Treatment Plant.

During a closing meeting, the OECS thanked the delegation for the EU's commitment to the Region and pledged to continue working together to deal with critical issues affecting the region and to better the lives of its people.



Plain View Combined School, Vieux Fort, Saint Lucia

Puzzle



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- INNOVATION
- VULNERABILITY
- HUMAN
- REALITY
- ECOSYSTEMS
- ACTION
- RESILIENCE
- ADAPTATION
- LIVELIHOODS
- VIRTUAL
- CLIMATE
- COASTAL
- DISASTER
- MOBILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY WORD SEARCH

Vulnerability

The propensity or predisposition of assets to be adversely affected by hazards. Vulnerability encompasses exposure, sensitivity, potential impacts, and adaptive capacity.

Resilience

The capacity of a community, business, or natural environment to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a disruption.

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The OECS Tackles Climate Issues

OECS Commission concludes successful 2nd NDC Investment Forum

OECS Director General, Dr. Dicadus Jules addressing the NDC Investment Forum Gathering



Caribbean
NDCFI



GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA

The 2nd NDC Investment Forum – a three-day event hosted by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Commission and the Government of Saint Lucia – concluded on Thursday July 7, 2022. The Forum, held at the Harbor Club Hotel in Saint Lucia, brought together OECS government leaders, policymakers, regional stakeholders, investors, and international partners to discuss the adoption of alternative energy sources, explore the decarbonizing of the Eastern Caribbean, harnessing the power of clean energy, and chart a path for environmental sustainability, while building

resilience to the impacts of climate change in several sectors including water, infrastructure, agriculture, mobility (transport), and finance.

The Caribbean Nationally Determined Contributions Finance Initiative (NDCFI) was launched in 2017 with the aim of supporting the efforts of Caribbean countries in meeting their pledges under the Paris Agreement, as well as other complementary climate actions. The NDCFI was established with the support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate



Change (UNFCCC) through the NDC Partnership, which brings together more than 115 countries, and more than 80 institutions to create and deliver on ambitious climate action that helps achieve the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



The NDC Forum was addressed by several high-level leaders, including Saint Lucia's Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism, Investment, Creative Industries, Culture and Information, Dr. Ernest Hilaire; Saint Lucia's Minister for Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Honourable Shawn Edward; and OECS Director General, Dr. Didacus Jules.

Dr. Ernest Hilaire was optimistic about the outcomes of the Forum. However he underscored the need for continued support of this initiative. In his address to the attendees he stated, "It is my hope therefore, that this forum will provide the means for enhancing the private sector's ability and capacity to contribute to the meaningful changes, not just at the national levels across Member States, but within the respective sectors in general. We will need to focus on ultimately building financial mechanisms to channel domestic finance and international support for implementation of our indices and other climate commitments across all sectors with all our partners."

Throughout the three-day event, practical solutions to reducing carbon emissions were explored, such as implementing policies to increase the use of electric vehicles to building more resilient infrastructure to safeguard property and resources. Honourable Shawn Edward noted, "Looking at the programme for this three-day forum, it is clear to me that we are moving in the right direction - From the Frontline, to the Future: Uniting the Caribbean for Bold Climate Action. There are many front lines these days, but that of climate change requires action that we build resilience across critical sectors such as water, energy, Infrastructure, transportation, finance, to name a few."

The OECS Director General gave a sobering address with a call to action for participants to make decisive changes to weather the storms – both literal and figurative – ahead.



NDC Investment Forum Participants with Saint Lucia's Minister for Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Honourable Shawn Edward, OECS Director General, Dr. Didacus Jules, and Hon. Cozier Frederick, Minister of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment, Dominica

"In reflecting on the latest scientific projections, I wish that I could truthfully quote from the hit song of yesteryear and say that the "future's so bright, I gotta wear shades"; but, sadly, the spectre of a climate future ruled by unbridled climate change is far from bright or rosy, even when viewed through the rosier-tinted of glasses. "There is an old saying that, if we are not careful, we will end up where we are going. Based on the science and the stark evidence on display around the world - including unprecedented floods, cyclones and droughts - where we are headed appears to be what would once have been considered the stuff of apocalyptic fiction movies. Such a future is the antithesis of a sustainable future and, thus, "the future we don't want"

"Yet, it is the contemplation of such a future that has galvanised the governments and people of the region to action; to pursue an alternative future- a future founded, not on fatalism, but on resolve and collective action and a belief that, along with a truly willing international community, we can turn the tide against climate change. This is the very reason that the Caribbean NDC Finance Initiative, or NDCFI was established and the very reason that we have chosen the theme of this Forum: From the Frontline to the Future: Uniting the Caribbean for Bold Climate Action.

"In short, to quote yet another song, we are "...living on the frontline..." but we can, and we must, overcome the existential climate threat by transitioning to resilient, low-carbon economies because our future, our very survival, depends on it."

An essential component of the Forum was the NDC Marketplace, an in-person and virtual exhibition of service providers within the private sector that support green and climate-friendly goods and services. The 2nd NDC Investment Forum was supported by GIZ, GET. invest, the European Union, the Global Green Growth Institute, NDC Partnership, the Republic of China (Taiwan), and the Caribbean Development Bank.



NDCFI PARTNERS



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change



Implemented by
giz



SAVE THE DATE!

Environmental Days



September

- 05 - Amazon Rainforests Day
- 16 - World Day for the preservation of the Ozone layer
- 18 - World Water Monitoring Day
- 21 - Zero Emissions Day
- 22 - Car Free Day

October

- 13 - International Disaster Reduction Day
(Theme: Early Warning and Early Action For All)
- 14 - International E-Waste Day

November

- 6-18 - UNFCCC Climate Change COP-27

December

- 7-19 - UN Biodiversity Conference (COP-15)

Brown Boobie

Photo by: Danny Moonie

Large seabird of inshore and offshore waters in tropical regions around the globe. Head, neck, and upperparts are solidly brown, except for adult males from Mexican Pacific Coast populations which have a whitish head and often an entirely whitish neck. Source: ebird.org



Wining photo by Sherrel Charles of Antigua and Barbuda



WINNERS...

Resilient Caribbean Cities Photo Competition 2022



The OECS Commission, through its Environmental Sustainability Division, recently announced the winners of the Resilient Caribbean Cities Photo Competition.

The competition invited members of the public to share their unique perspectives on how the region is adapting to the impacts of climate change. The long-listed photographs and captions appear in an open online gallery: bit.ly/Carib-resilience

Amateur photographers submitted entries in three categories:

- People Power: social and business innovations for resilience
- Nature-Based Solutions: green and blue infrastructure that boosts resilience
- Design and Technology: resilient features of the

built environment and infrastructure

People Power and Overall Competition Winner

Ms Sherrel Charles of Antigua and Barbuda won the top competition prize and the **'People Power'** category with her entry, **'People Power in the Back Garden'**. Her photo depicts a homegrown solution to Antigua and Barbuda's prolonged droughts. In the picture by Sherrel Charles of Antigua and Barbuda, her young cousin uses a simple but effective drip irrigation system that the photographer's parents rigged up for their kitchen garden.

"I believe the younger generation should be introduced to these concepts from an early age so that they know how serious climate change is and how important it is to manage resources properly," Ms Charles said. The home-made drip irrigation system has reduced the impacts of climate change for her family.





Runner-up and winner of the 'Nature-Based Solutions' category: Alexis Armande

Nature-Based Solutions Winner

Runner-up and winner of the '**Nature-Based Solutions**' category is Ms Alexis Armande of Guadeloupe with her entry, '**Mangrove Conservation in Guadeloupe.**' Her entry illustrates a project carried out by the municipality of Morne-à-l'Eau, which includes a wooden footbridge crossing the mangrove to Babin Beach. Thanks to this project, the ecosystem is preserved and offers many amenities to visitors - people can enjoy mud baths, picnics and peaceful walks in nature.

What is more, *"the Eastern Caribbean is often exposed to climate hazards, and this conservation measure enables nature to regenerate faster,"* Ms Armande said. *"The nature-based solution depicted here considerably reduces the impacts likely to be caused by humans and helps to raise awareness of the importance of nature conservation,"* she added.

Design and Technology Winner

Runner-up and winner of the '**Design and technology**' category is Ms Shanis Cato of St Vincent and the Grenadines with '**Resilient Seafront in Georgetown.**' Her photograph shows so-called 'X-blocks' in a newly-constructed sea wall, which are designed to absorb wave energy and reduce damage to the town.

"The sea wall is a relief for many of the townsfolk," Ms Cato said. *"It protects the community that has been subjected to many floods, especially during the hurricane season. The coastal defence project, completed in 2021, not only protects against severe wave action affecting infrastructure, but also protects many as the sea - despite its beautiful nature - has claimed many souls."*

More inspiring stories

Sherrel Charles, Alexis Armande and Shanis Cato all speak about the stories behind their pictures in a celebratory event broadcast here:

<https://youtu.be/Wl1wKWa-RPY>



Four (4) honourable mentions from the extensive list of entries were announced as follows:

- Che-Raina Warner, St Kitts and Nevis, 'Building Green deFENCES Against Climate Change'
- Sandrine Myrtil, Guadeloupe, 'Commercial Areas in Baie Mahault Become More Resilient'
- Delphine Touzouli, Guadeloupe, 'Another Look at the Memorial ACTe, Guadeloupe'
- Reichel Neil, Jamaica 'Defending Vital Infrastructure.'

Competition Organisers

The organisations behind the competition are the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, the University of the West Indies, the Université des Antilles and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Adapt'Action programme. The competition is part of a larger initiative by these partners to increase awareness, understanding and skill for strengthening adaptation to climate change in Eastern Caribbean cities.

Mr. Crispin d'Auvergne, Programme Director for Climate and Disaster Resilience at the OECS Commission said: *"It's been amazing to see people's motivation and imagination as they have shared their stories of resilience through this competition. People are showing how they're finding enjoyment in nature, food and water security, and protection from natural hazards in some of the adaptation solutions shown in the photos. The competition shows that there is a lot of energy among citizens of the Eastern Caribbean for the climate change adaptation agenda. I trust this energy will grow and grow to meet our shared challenge."*

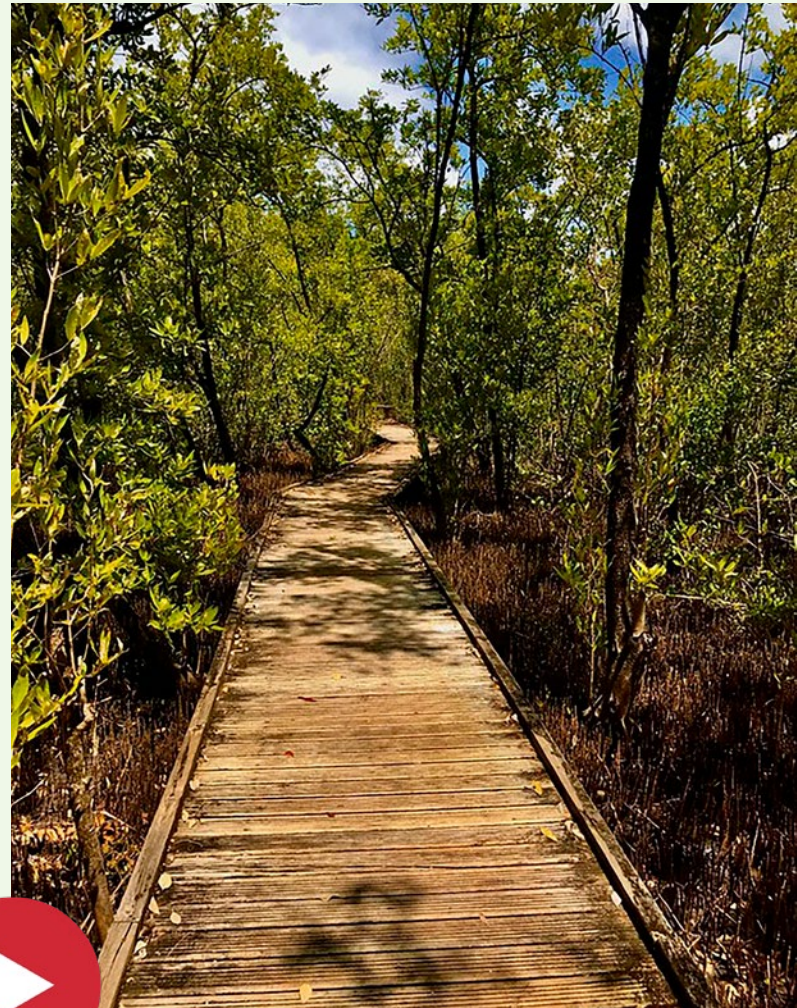
Ms. Elodie Afonso, AdaptAction Regional Program Coordinator for the Caribbean - Expertise France added: *"Throughout its work in the Eastern Caribbean countries, AdaptAction showed that these territories share many climate vulnerabilities and risks. Their impacts on cities have become increasingly clear. The projected increase in the number and intensity of extreme weather events, together with the lack of resilience and socio-economic fragility of urban centres in Latin America and the Caribbean region, exacerbates the risk of floods, landslides, droughts and other natural disasters. Climate change therefore poses a profound challenge to built environments. This photo competition was a way for our organizations to show that art can be an efficient way to raise awareness about the needs for adaptation to climate change."*

About the project

The Project, Building climate-resilient cities in the Eastern Caribbean, seeks to equip today's and tomorrow's urban planners and practitioners with the tools, expertise and critical thinking skills to transform Eastern Caribbean cities into places that are socially just and resilient to climate hazards. The project is doing this by developing a new, tailored educational curriculum for urban planning students and professionals in the region. This has the potential to transform the way Eastern Caribbean cities adapt to climate change.

The project also seeks to raise broader public awareness of climate change and support for resilience measures by running this photo competition - which will engage and motivate citizens from across the Eastern Caribbean region.

Runner-up and winner of the 'Design and technology' category: Shanis Cato



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Photo by Danny Moonie

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