



## **Opportunities, initiatives, issues and strategies for “green” economic development in the Caribbean**

---

The Caribbean Green Economy Action Learning Group (GE ALG) has produced a series of discussion papers on key issues, policies, initiatives, and opportunities for the development of a new approach to economic development in the Caribbean. “The green economy is, in the first place, an approach to sustainable development that entails sustainable consumption and production, social equity and environmental conservation” according to Dr. Michael Witter of the University of the West Indies (UWI), who is a member of the GE ALG and an author of one of the discussion papers.

The series of papers seeks to stimulate discussion on how to transform Caribbean policy and practice at the regional, national and local levels. They are published by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

### **Case studies from Cuba, Barbados and Saint Lucia**

Three papers draw lessons and identify opportunities from specific Caribbean case studies in Cuba, Barbados and Saint Lucia.

Yociel Marrero Baez talks about the current “doorstep economy” that has emerged after exhaustion of the centralised economy model in Cuba. He suggests that investment is needed in developing the business and financial capacities of these new entrepreneurs or business associations to support them. He feels that while Cuba is in the process of transforming its economic model there is great opportunity to introduce elements of a green economy.

Augustine Dominique and Yves Renard report on locally driven development through arts and culture in the coastal community of Laborie in Saint Lucia, which hosts the popular annual “Jazz in the South” event that brings in revenue for local businesses.

Dr. Winston Moore discusses the experience of Barbados in moving towards the vision of the Late Honourable David J. Thompson for Barbados to become “the most environmentally advanced green country in Latin America and the Caribbean”. This hinges on transforming key sectors - agriculture, fisheries, building, transportation and tourism.

### **Triple bottom line approaches and building small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs)**

Triple bottom line approaches and building small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) are presented as key approaches to help with economic transformation.

McHale Andrew discusses the work of Invest Saint Lucia which is the official investment arm of the Government of Saint Lucia and lead agency to promote and facilitate inward investment in order to spur

sustained economic growth and development. They are using a triple bottom line approach to consider environmental and social criteria along with economic factors to make decisions on investments in priority sectors identified for Saint Lucia, including tourism, manufacturing and other natural products.

Sarah McIntosh gives recommendations on how SMMEs can be catalysed and supported. She notes that these are already significant contributors to Gross Domestic Product and employment in the Caribbean, with CARICOM estimating that up to 70% of jobs are in this sector. They are also expected to be the main engine for future job creation and growth, and particularly “green” growth.

Michael Witter discusses the vulnerability of Caribbean economies, and therefore societies, to risks. Environmental hazards including climate change and natural disasters threaten economies. Economic stresses themselves are critical for small Caribbean economies, including stresses from indebtedness, global market changes, limited resources (especially energy), and our continued need to import food and energy. Social risks include the outflow of technical skills that diminishes regional technical capacity. He identifies key strategies for economic transformation including managing debt, shifting to green technologies, diversifying the tourism sector, transforming the energy sector, developing new industrial structures that network small and medium sized producers, and using cultural services as drivers for economic development.

### **Changing Caribbean policy**

This important thinking from regional leaders comes amidst calls across the Caribbean for a new approach to economic development that reduces poverty and increases social equity, is resilient to climate change and natural disasters, builds entrepreneurial capacity, uses technology and innovation, explores opportunities for green industries and jobs, and operates within natural ecological limits and protects ecosystem services.

Several regional fora were held in June and July at which these ideas were discussed. This included the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the *Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States* (SIDS 2014) in Jamaica, the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in Trinidad and Tobago, and the conference “*Green Economy as a Vehicle for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication in the Caribbean*” hosted by the Government of Saint Lucia with partners CARICOM and UNEP.

National, regional and international policy discussions and initiatives on moving towards a “green economy” are reviewed in a paper by Shawn Carter and provide lessons and recommendations for how the Caribbean can move forward with transforming its model of economic development.

### **The Caribbean Green Economy Action Learning Group**

The GE ALG is a regional multi-disciplinary group of development professionals and academics from across the English-, French- and Spanish-speaking islands of the Caribbean, with a range of expertise including macroeconomics, planning, tourism, agriculture, rural development, gender and climate change. The group’s purpose is to identify and promote ways in which “green economy” can advance sustainable development in the Caribbean through shaping visions, perspectives, positions and actions. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) serves as convener for the Group.

## Publications attached

GE ALG Discussion Papers:

1. [\*The “Green Economy Factory” in the Caribbean\*](#) by Yociel Marrero Baez
2. [\*Triple bottom line methods for assessing public investment: the case of Invest Saint Lucia\*](#) by McHale Andrew
3. [\*From a “doorstep economy” to a green economy: a case study of Cuba\*](#) by Yociel Marrero
4. [\*Catalysing and supporting sustainable small, medium and micro enterprise development\*](#) by Sarah McIntosh
5. [\*Green Economy in Practice: The Barbadian Perspective\*](#) by Winston Moore
6. [\*The Policy Flux: Current Green Economy Policy Initiatives in the Caribbean\*](#) by Shawn Carter
7. [\*Community-based development through arts and culture: Case study from Laborie, Saint Lucia\*](#) by Augustine Dominique and Yves Renard
8. [\*Regional economic uncertainties and risks – the next 10 years\*](#) by Michael Witter

## About CANARI

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 20 years. Our mission is to promote equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, capacity building and fostering regional partnerships.

### For further information, please contact:

Nicole Leotaud, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute at [nicole@canari.org](mailto:nicole@canari.org) or +1 868-626-6062  
Information on CANARI's [Green Economy Programme](#)

**Submitted on 25 July 2013**