

10 ways that small and micro enterprises can drive the Caribbean green economy



Small and micro enterprises (SMEs) in the Caribbean green economy factor in environmental and social costs and benefits in their economic models as part of the 'triple bottom line approach'.

Below are 10 actions that SMEs can take to drive the green economy in the Caribbean.

Economic

Make money - share benefits

Get legal! Legally register your enterprise with relevant agencies. Commit to fulfilling all of the legal requirements of a business. You may qualify for grants, low-interest loans and subsidies to improve your business.

Share benefits. Distribute wages and profits fairly so that everyone profits from your business. Support local community development projects and programmes.

Certified green! Get registered/ certified as a green enterprise where possible. It can be used as a marketing tool.

Environmental

Wise use + no damage

Reduce, reuse, recycle. Reduce energy and water consumption and waste. Buy and use less. Reuse old items. Recycle-old things can be used in new ways.

Make simple plans. Create water, waste, energy, air quality and noise management plans for your enterprise. Document your progress. These can help you structure and monitor your enterprise's environmental quality.

Think before you act. Consider the environmental impact of all business decisions. Use natural resources from forests and seas sustainably. Do not do environmental damage (e.g. pollution). Do not use those who do.

Social

Benefitting people

Support local! Use locally owned and operated businesses and hire persons from the community. Support your local community and it becomes stronger. buy local products.

Offer decent work. Provide decent work and humane treatment for employees. Follow all occupational health and safety regulations and best practices.

Be gender and youth conscious. Women and youth contribute to the growth of the community. Support female and youth owned enterprises.

Network. Share information and collaborate with other SMEs to create a movement for change.

Vision of a Caribbean green economy: A Green Economy in the Caribbean context aims for long-term prosperity through equitable distribution of economic benefits and effective management of ecological resources; it is economically viable and resilient, self-directed, self-reliant, and pro-poor.

The Caribbean green economy: examples of SMEs



Craft items



Agriculture



Spa products



Fishing



Ecotourism



The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is working with others to explore how we can catalyse, support and empower SMEs so that they bring co-benefits (economic, environmental sustainability, social equity) and address issues of the informal sector in the Caribbean. Website: http://canari.org/ge_projecti.asp. Contact: Keisha Sandy at keisha@canari.org.

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This material is part-funded by UK aid from the UK Government via a grant to the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) and a sub grant to CANARI. However, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the UK Government. CANARI would like to acknowledge ongoing support from IIED in developing our *Green Economy* programme of work. IIED promotes sustainable development, linking local priorities to global challenges. It supports some of the world's most vulnerable people to strengthen their voice in decision-making.

