



## Discussion Paper for the development of the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy (CBS) - Biodiversity and Natural Resource Based Livelihoods

April 2018

### Synopsis

**Target 14 of the Global Biodiversity Strategy states that:** By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable. **Target 4 advocates that:** By 2020, at the latest, Governments, businesses and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

Caribbean livelihoods, especially rural livelihoods, are heavily dependent on biodiversity and ecosystem services. These are primarily at the scale of small and micro sized enterprises (SMEs) which if properly planned and managed can often protect critical ecosystems while providing for community socio-economic needs. To put it another way, nature based SMEs can deliver a “triple bottom line” of economic, environmental and social benefits.

A number of regional organisations and regional programmes focus on biodiversity based sustainable livelihoods. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) for example, is a well-established regional civil society organisation working in this area as part of its Rural Livelihoods and related Green Economy programme areas. CANARI was the Regional Implementing Agency for the first phase of investment for the Caribbean Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Phase 1, which focused heavily on strengthening biodiversity based livelihoods of communities situated in and around key biodiversity areas. This included eco-tourism and beekeeping-based livelihoods in countries like Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Jamaica. During CEPF Phase 1, novel approaches to biodiversity based enterprises were also developed, e.g. the involvement of business groups in the biodiversity networks of the Dominican Republic. An emerging area of work for CANARI is “climate proofing” of nature based enterprises which builds resilience to the negative impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

The concept of sustainable livelihoods is related to that of sustainable consumption and production or the more overarching perspective of Green Economy which “In the context of the Caribbean, a Green Economy is one that aims for long-term prosperity, rather than solely for growth, through equitable distribution of economic benefits and effective management of ecological resources. It is economically viable and resilient to both external and internal shocks; self-directed and not driven by external agendas or funding opportunities, and self-reliant by being based predominantly on domestic production and investment. A Caribbean Green Economy is pro-poor generating decent jobs and working conditions that offer opportunities for self-advancement for local people” (CANARI Policy Brief 13).

Regional progress has been made, both in the areas of biodiversity based livelihoods and Green Economy, but it is noted that greater support is needed in: business support services, knowledge exchange, mechanisms for input into policy and decision making and access to financial and other resources. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund draft profile (2017) points to the need for further regional investment to “support sustainable livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and nature tourism that enhance ecosystem resilience and landscape-level connectivity in areas of strategic importance to the CEPF hotspot portfolio.” In particular, the profile advocates for continued support for local communities to “conceive, develop and/or implement sustainable livelihood projects”.

**Taking into consideration the issues outlined above as well as other issues you may be aware of, stakeholders are asked to consider:**

What should the CBS showcase, state or highlight on the issue of biodiversity related livelihoods to best address:

- your organisation’s needs
- your country’s needs – where national capacity and resources could benefit from additional regional support
- regional needs

Stakeholders are also asked to consider:

- How can the CBS advance sustainable livelihoods among natural resource dependent SMEs?
- How can the CBS advance the concept of green economy across all scale enterprises in all sectors to best protect biodiversity?

Finally: any additional issues, ideas or points on biodiversity related livelihoods you would like to highlight for inclusion or consideration in the development of the Strategy?

### **Bibliography**

Caribbean Community. 2017. *Draft Synthesis Report for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) strategy for the implementation of the biodiversity cluster of MEAs.*

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. 2018. *Draft Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Ecosystem Profile Update.*

CANARI. 2012. *Towards a green and resilient economy for the Caribbean. Policy Brief 13.* Laventille: CANARI.