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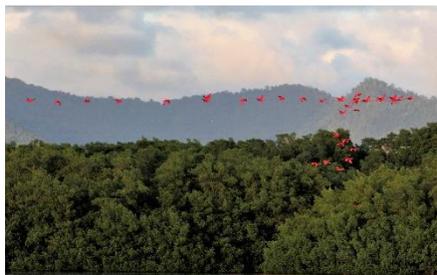
Setting priorities for the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy

Port of Spain, April 9, 2018 – The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is facilitating the development of the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The strategy aims to enhance implementation of the biodiversity cluster of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, with emphasis on the Convention on Biodiversity Strategic Plan for 2011-2020. Cuba and The Dominican Republic are included in this regional initiative along with the Members of CARICOM.

A highly participatory process is being used to develop the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy, with widespread and in-depth feedback from a variety of stakeholders including government officials, academia, civil society, private sector and others. “A unique aspect of the regional consultations” noted Dr. Natalie Boodram, CANARI team leader for this initiative “is that **civil society** has been the first key stakeholder grouping to input to the structure and content of this Strategy”. Thus far, national civil society consultations have taken place in Grenada and St. Lucia. A regional civil society workshop on the Strategy was held in Jamaica during January 2018, with representatives from regional and national civil society organisations (CSOs) from countries like Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and the Bahamas.



A subset of participants at the regional CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy, Civil Society Organisation workshop (Jamaica, January 2018) in Jamaica



Caroni Swamp: a biodiversity rich protected area in Trinidad and Tobago (Photo credit N. Boodram)

During these meetings CSOs identified priority biodiversity concerns that they would like to see reflected and addressed in the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy. These included: climate resilience, invasive species management, application and sharing of best practices and innovative techniques for biodiversity conservation and enabling structures, frameworks and investment for scaling up biodiversity-friendly livelihoods. National and regional meetings with other stakeholder groups will continue in 2018. All stakeholders are invited to identify their priority issues, concerns and suggestions for the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy online through the [CANARI CBS Consultation Website](#).

These inputs will be synthesised, presented at an upcoming CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy Workshop in Guyana and incorporated into the draft CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy. The draft Strategy coming out of that workshop will also be made available to all stakeholders online for feedback before finalisation.

The CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy is an output under the Caribbean Hub sub-component of Phase II of the Programme for Capacity-Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The programme is supported by the European Union (EU) and UN Environment.

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 25 years. Our mission is to promote equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on capacity building, policy planning and development, research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, and fostering regional partnerships. See here for more information on CANARI: <http://www.canari.org/>.

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