

#Talanoa4Ambition
#1point5tostayalive

Preliminary inputs from Caribbean civil society into the Talanoa Dialogue

2 April 2018

In February 2018, in response to the invitation from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat and the High-Level Champions to non-Party stakeholders to provide inputs to the Talanoa Dialogue, [Panos Caribbean](#), with the support of [Climate Analytics](#), has organised a process aimed at: (a) informing civil society, the private sector and other non-State actors of this Facilitative Dialogue, (b) highlighting its relevance and importance to the Caribbean region, and (c) encouraging inputs into the Dialogue. This process builds on the campaign initiated by Caribbean stakeholders in July 2015 in support of ambition and of the 1.5 degrees target. Climate Analytics and Panos Caribbean are committed to sustain this Talanoa process among non-State actors in the Caribbean over the coming months and to provide a comprehensive statement in advance of the October deadline.

Activities conducted since the effective launch of the [Dialogue and its Portal](#) include:

- Convening a panel, alongside the Inter-sessional Meeting of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Port au Prince, Haiti, which brought together representatives of government, regional institutions, the scientific community, the media and civil society to discuss how the CARICOM sub-region may enhance its voice in the global negotiation process to push for more ambitious climate action. The panel specifically discussed strategies for enhancing regional coordination across sectors, and for positioning the region to take full advantage of opportunities for representation, particularly through enhanced civil society participation in climate change discussions.
- Creating a dedicated webpage in [English](#) and [French](#) as well as using social media to inform stakeholders and encourage inputs.

Caribbean stakeholders have noted the scientific evidence in support of efforts to limit the planet's temperature increase to 1.5°C, and there is overwhelming support from non-State actors, including the youth (e.g. Caribbean Youth Environment Network), the private sector (e.g. national and regional hotel associations), the farming community (e.g. Caribbean Farmers' Network) and national coalitions (e.g. *Plateforme de la Société Civile sur le Changement Climatique* in Haiti) for the positions articulated by Caribbean State Parties in the UNFCCC.

Caribbean stakeholders have further noted that the Parties' pledged actions (Nationally Determined Contributions) currently put the world on a pathway to a 3 °C or 4°C increase in average global temperatures, and that this is a far cry from the Paris Agreement's goal to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C and pursue efforts to limit this increase

to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. Such an increase would be catastrophic for the countries of the Caribbean region, which are already experiencing deadly impacts of climate change with a 1 °C average increase in global temperatures.

Views, opinions and recommendations expressed below respond to the Dialogue's third central question of "How do we get there?":

- In the face of the many challenges posed by climate change, the Caribbean must raise its voice to **demand and support the 1.5°C target**, and advocacy, diplomacy and commitments must be both firm and ambitious, for it is necessary to ensure that the transition to renewable energy and a sharp reduction in emissions are not only implemented, but accelerated – for the sands are running out. This is a mission that should not be left only to climate change negotiators. Caribbean leaders and diplomats, the private sector and civil society must also be vocal on the international scene and at home.
- The global response to climate change must not be reduced to a mechanical concept. It needs to be accompanied by a renewed approach to economic development and by a change in mentality, so that it is included in the broader context of people's livelihoods, social values and development priorities. Artists, civil society leaders and other actors in the Caribbean emphasise the need to challenge the dominant approaches to development and to help shape **new relationships between people, businesses, institutions and the natural world**.
- As clearly expressed in the attached statement from the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), **community-based and ecosystem-based approaches** are critical to build resilience to climate change, especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). "Investing in conserving, sustainably managing and restoring ecosystems," CANARI states, "provides multiple benefits in terms of building ecological, economic and social resilience, as well as mitigation co-benefits through carbon sequestration by forests and mangroves".
- As evidenced all over the Caribbean in recent years, it is the poorest, the marginalised and the most vulnerable who are the most affected by climate change: small farmers suffering from more severe drought, households without insurance unable to recover from devastating hurricanes, people living with disabilities unable to cope with the impacts of disasters. Climate change exacerbates inequalities, and **adaptation measures must provide the necessary buffers and support to poor and vulnerable groups**.
- All sectoral, national and international legal and policy frameworks must recognise the benefits that can be gained from **participation and partnerships**, including the empowerment of communities, businesses, trade unions and civil society organisations to enable them to play a direct role in the identification and implementation of solutions, particularly in reference to adaptation.
- **The architecture and operations of climate finance institutions must be improved to:** (a) facilitate direct access by national and regional actors, (b) enhance the place of evaluation, lessons learning and sharing in programme and project design, (c) consider the

financing of adaptation actions on the basis of full cost, especially in small countries where there is limited potential to secure co-financing, (d) enhance complementarity and coherence among financing mechanisms, (e) facilitate civil society and private sector involvement in project design and execution, and, (f) increase SIDS representation in the governance of financing institutions.

- In light of the critical importance of decentralised and community-based approaches to adaptation and resilience-building, financing institutions and mechanisms should design and implement facilities that **make technical assistance and financing available to local actors**, as is being done, with significant success, by the Small Grants Programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- Even in some of the poorest countries of the region, local actors have been taking the initiative in responding to the impacts of climate change. For the Caribbean, a regional coalition of civil society actors is necessary so as to build solidarity, and to share experiences and expertise on climate action in local contexts. **These civil society networks must reinforce and build on actions taken by regional governments, and more international support is required** for this work to be undertaken.
- Increased resources and capacities in **communications and advocacy** are required in order to disseminate the scientific evidence on climate change, to deepen understanding within the region on climate change and its impacts, and to push for more ambitious action on climate change at the global level.

Attached: Statement by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)



Talanoa Dialogue

Statement from the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) Action by civil society to build climate change resilience through community-based and ecosystem-based solutions

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) appreciates the opportunity to input into the Talanoa Dialogue and thanks PANOS Caribbean and Climate Analytics for facilitating this process in the Caribbean region. **We wish to call for greater attention and support for community-based and ecosystem-based approaches to build resilience to climate change.**

CANARI is an independent regional technical non-profit institute working across the Caribbean islands for nearly thirty years. Having worked extensively with local, regional and national civil society organisations and rural communities on participatory natural resource management, conservation and development of sustainable livelihoods, we would like to highlight the importance of focusing on community-based and ecosystem-based adaptation to build local resilience to climate change and the need for capacity building and funding to enhance civil society's role.

Adaptation actions in the Caribbean region have tended to focus on awareness raising and communications, building capacity for research and climate modelling and information services, vulnerability assessments, development of national policies and plans and 'hard' infrastructure (e.g. sea walls) especially where natural ecosystem services (e.g. for coastal protection) have been lost. The majority of these actions have been implemented through large multi-country projects, with funding directed to regional agencies and national governments to address their needs rather than to 'on the ground' actions. Within the last five years, the focus has shifted to concrete actions at the local level and specific attention has been given to ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation to climate change, including some funding to support actions by civil society and local communities.

In the Caribbean, the potentially grave impacts of climate change and related disasters have come to the forefront in the wake of the destruction from the two unprecedented Category 5 Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. If greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, the cost to Caribbean islands in terms of increased hurricane damage, infrastructure damage and loss of tourism revenue is projected to reach \$22 billion by 2050 or 10% of the current regional economy. Natural ecosystems help limit the impacts of climate change and disasters and serve as natural defences. They are also critical to key economic sectors in the region, including tourism, agriculture and fisheries, and the livelihoods of the rural poor, who are particularly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters because of their socio-economic constraints. **Investing in conserving, sustainably managing and restoring ecosystems therefore provides multiple benefits in terms of building ecological, economic and social resilience as well as mitigation co-benefits through carbon sequestration by forests and mangroves.**

Ecosystem-based adaptation is widely endorsed by multilateral environmental agreements and international organisations as a key adaptation strategy that uses biodiversity and ecosystems to help people address the adverse impacts of climate change. However, the concept is fairly new and evolving and not fully understood or being adopted in the Caribbean. There is also a danger that ecosystem-based approaches are being implemented without engagement of stakeholders and

consideration of livelihood needs. **A narrow focus on applying nature-based solutions without engagement of civil society and local communities is unlikely to ensure an inclusive, bottom-up approach that responds to local needs, especially of the most vulnerable, and to achieve fair and equitable outcomes. Taking into account how stakeholders are engaged, use of local alongside scientific knowledge and how to ensure good governance and balance conservation and development goals for socio-economic benefits is critical.**

There are practical examples of community-based and ecosystem-based adaptation in action, drawing on the work of civil society organisations, local resource users and community enterprises. These include:

- *Participatory research and communications to document and share local and traditional knowledge relevant to adaptation and increase understanding of the impacts of climate change and related hazards on ecosystems and associated livelihoods and adaptation options that are culturally-appropriate and viable:* Regional and international civil society organisations, including CANARI, PANOS Caribbean and The Nature Conservancy, have piloted participatory three-dimensional modelling of watersheds and whole islands using a 'ridge to reef' approach in Anguilla, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. This supported local communities and other stakeholders to identify vulnerabilities and adaptation actions using an ecosystem-based approach. Toolkits and innovative communication products, such as participatory video, are being used with vulnerable groups including women, youth and resources users like farmers and fisherfolk to showcase lessons and best practices from vulnerability assessments and community-based and ecosystem-based adaptation projects.
- *Capacity building for community-based organisations and enterprises and local resource users to assess climate change impacts and design and implement practical actions to adapt and build the resilience of their livelihoods and enterprises using an ecosystem approach:* The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, International Union for Conservation of Nature and a mix of civil society, academic and local government organisations in Jamaica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have supported 14 local ecosystem-based adaptation initiatives to protect coastal and marine resources over 2014-2018.
- *Advocacy to promote participatory policy development and creating a platform for diverse stakeholders, including local communities and enterprises, resources users, women and youth, to have a voice and seat at the table in adaptation planning and decision-making at local, national, regional and global levels:* At the regional level, the Gender in Fisheries Team is actively promoting an ecosystem approach to fisheries and gender equality in small-scale fisheries as part of the as part of the adoption Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) and a Gender Mainstreaming Protocol for the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy. Members of the Gender in Fisheries Team are the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West Indies, CANARI, the Caribbean National Fisherfolk Organisation and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Secretariat.

To scale up impact, and expand on this innovative work on community-based and ecosystem-based climate adaptation actions by civil society and local communities, support will be needed in three areas. (1) Strengthening the organisational and technical capacity of civil society organisations, local resource users and community enterprises is key so they can play a significant role in implementing local adaptation actions and in climate change advocacy and policy development at the national, regional and global levels. (2) Development of strategic partnerships among civil society organisations, communities, policy makers and donors is needed to foster knowledge exchange on best practices and innovations and build synergies to enhance community-

based and ecosystem-based adaptation. (3) Funding to directly support civil society engagement in adaptation planning and implementation and enable strategic partnerships spanning local to global levels is also essential.