



For Release on World Oceans Day, June 8, 2021

Supporting an inclusive blue economy in the Caribbean

Port of Spain, June 8, 2021 – To celebrate World Oceans Day on June 8 on the theme of “The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods,” the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) has released a podcast mini-series entitled “Blue-green enterprises: Caribbean journeys” which showcases the inspiring stories of six local community micro-enterprises using ocean resources to develop sustainable livelihoods and provide economic opportunities in their communities.

These local blue-green enterprises and others like them are critical to local economic development in coastal communities around the Caribbean. More than 134 million people who live on or near the coast are supported by the Caribbean Sea’s ocean economy. According to Dr Didacus Jules, Director General of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, “The sea is currently a subsistence resource for coastal villagers ... these are the real people who are the human focus of our blue economy work ... We want to help them move from subsistence to prosperity.”

Several Caribbean governments and international and regional agencies have seized on the promise of the “blue economy” for economic development, including as part of the COVID-19 recovery. Focus has been largely on expanding existing economic sectors, like fisheries, tourism and shipping, as well as developing new sectors such as seabed mining and offshore renewable energy. But there has not been enough emphasis on how blue economy can provide economic opportunities and benefits to the poor and vulnerable in coastal communities.



Members of KOOPA-3B honey-producers association in Haiti with their mentor, Josue Celiscar (far left) presenting their Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar showing where they want to strengthen their business (Credit: FoProBiM)

CANARI and others have been working to support micro-enterprises in coastal communities under the Powering Innovations in Civil Society and Enterprises for Sustainability in the Caribbean (PISCES) project, funded by the European Union (ENV/2016/380-530). Under the project, expert small business mentors worked on the ground with community entrepreneurs to help them strengthen their businesses and enhance their environmental sustainability while delivering social and economic benefits. Micro-grants helped enterprises to build their capacity in marketing, financial record keeping and accounting; develop partnerships; identify new revenue streams and value-added opportunities; and climate-proof their business.

The podcasts feature six enterprises – Petite Martinique Women in Action from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the East Grand Bahama Fly Fishermen from the Bahamas, the Bluefields Bay

Fishermen’s Friendly Society from Jamaica, Kowoperativ Apikòl Twa Bè (KOOPA-3B) and Kowoperativ Ekotouris Twa Bè (KOOPEK-3B) from Haiti, and the Local Area Management Authority for the Soufriere-Scotts Head Marine Reserve in Dominica. The stories are told by the entrepreneurs and their mentors, who describe their challenges and innovations as they work to strengthen their businesses and communities.

The podcast stories demonstrate the power of supporting community enterprises as a pathway to an inclusive, sustainable and resilient Caribbean blue economy. “Don’t give up. Don’t stop learning. Don’t ever be discouraged or dissuaded by anyone who says that’s not going to work or that can’t work,” shared Akeisha Clarke from Petite Martinique Women in Action in the first episode.

Long-term mentoring, tailored capacity building in business development, access to information and communication technologies and micro-finance are needed to support local community enterprises to enhance and expand their work. Strengthened support for development of a vibrant micro-enterprise sector that is better recognised and integrated within the Caribbean economy will be critical for COVID-19 recovery and sustainable development.

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Access the podcasts: “Blue-green enterprises: Caribbean journeys” mini-series

- [Petite Martinique Women in Action](#), Grenada
- [Local Area Management Authority](#), Dominica
- [East Grand Bahama Fly Fishermen](#), Bahamas
- [KOOPA-3B and KOOPEK-3B](#), Haiti
- [Bluefields Bay Fishermen’s Friendly Society](#), Jamaica

About the project: The Powering Innovations in Civil Society and Enterprises for Sustainability in the Caribbean (PISCES) project (2017-2021) was implemented by CANARI in partnership with the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (C-CAM), the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG), the Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM), Sustainable Grenadines Inc (SusGren), and the Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT). It was funded by the European Union (ENV/2016/380-530). PISCES contributed to addressing priority issues and needs in the Caribbean by enhancing marine and coastal biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic development. See here for more information on the project: <https://canari.org/pisces/>

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean for over 30 years. See <http://www.canari.org/>.

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