



Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda 2023-2030

Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance
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Members of the Antigua and Barbuda Association of Persons with Disabilities showcasing a climate-smart and inclusive agriculture initiative ©HaMa Productions and Refica Attwood

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Call to Action for Climate Justice for the Caribbean

The Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance is **calling for urgent and accelerated implementation to tackle the climate crisis and address the needs of Caribbean small islands developing states (SIDS) and other vulnerable countries.**

The findings from the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sixth assessment report¹ are clear and highlight the need for urgency and decisiveness. An increase of over 1°C in global temperature above 1850-1900 levels has already been observed between 2010-2019 as greenhouse gas emissions from human activity drive widespread and unprecedented climatic changes. Further, under the five emission scenarios ranging from business-as-usual to a future with ambitious emission cuts, a dangerous increase of 2°C or more above 1850-1900 levels is projected by 2100. The critical 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement will be exceeded during the 21st century unless there are deep reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions in the coming decades.

With 70% of the Caribbean population living and working in coastal areas, where most of the infrastructure is located, climate change poses an existential threat to our communities, economic sectors and natural ecosystems. Impacts are already being felt through coastal erosion due to sea level rise, coral bleaching and marine ecosystem damage with higher sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification, water shortages due to rainfall variability and saltwater intrusion, and more intense hurricanes and storms among others². If greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, and global temperature exceeds 1.5°C, these impacts will threaten the very existence of our way of life in the Caribbean and other SIDS³ that have contributed the least to global emissions.

- 1 IPCC. 2021. Summary for Policymakers. In: Masson-Delmotte, V. et al. (eds). Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In press. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf
- 2 Mycoo, M., et al. 2022. Small Islands. In: Pörtner, H.-O., et al. (eds.). Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_Chapter15.pdf
- 3 IPCC. 2021. Summary for Policymakers. In: Masson-Delmotte, V. et al. (eds). Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In press. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf

The havoc wreaked by the Category 5 Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 and Hurricane Dorian in 2019 and most recently by the Category 4 Hurricane Ian in 2022 provide a glimpse into this stark future.

Bringing together civil society organisations, grassroots leaders and activists, academics, creatives and the media, the **Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance⁴** seeks to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable communities and groups on the frontlines and catalyse actions for climate justice and local resilience in Caribbean SIDS. Working closely with vulnerable communities, our allies are seeing first-hand the impacts of climate change on these communities, their livelihoods and the resources they depend upon. These impacts are often hardest on the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, including small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, rural women producers, elderly and disabled persons, the income poor, migrants, Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities and LGBTQIA+ persons.

This **Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda** has been developed by the Alliance and outlines priority needs and actions by 2030 based on deliberative dialogues with vulnerable groups and wider civil society across the region. These priorities include:

1. Curbing emissions to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C
2. Scaling up locally-led solutions for adaptation and loss and damage
3. Improving access to and delivery of climate finance for frontline communities, small and micro enterprises and civil society organisations as part of a ‘whole of society’ approach
4. Scaling up just, nature-based solutions for adaptation, mitigation and resilience
5. Supporting a just transition for pro-poor, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development
6. Promoting gender equitable and social inclusive approaches to climate action
7. Promoting youth and intergenerational equity as core to the climate response

The Alliance is also calling for a **rights-based and earth-centred approach** in addressing all these priorities within the Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda, taking into account the rights of women, youth, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ persons, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, migrants and other marginalised groups, the rights of future generations, rights to a healthy and safe environment as an autonomous right, and the right to self-determination.

⁴ For more details on the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance, see <https://canari.org/caribbean-climate-justice-alliance/>



Goal and Approach to the Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda

The goal of the Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda is to:

- offer a shared vision of climate action by and for civil society and other non-state actors that reflects the needs, priorities and realities of the region;
- enable collective advocacy to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable and influence national, regional and global policies; and
- enable collective action towards a pro-poor, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and climate resilient approach to development.

The approach has been to develop the Agenda collaboratively through deliberative dialogues convened from September 2021 to April 2023. Over 80 thought leaders, activists, creatives, civil society organisations and other state and non-state actors from across the Caribbean shared their perspectives on climate justice – encompassing economic, environmental and social justice - through a series of written blogs, video interviews and interactive online discussions. Online discussions included the Set the Agenda dialogue series, with six regional dialogues on themes ranging from human rights and climate change to adaptation and loss and damage, gender justice, finance and debt sustainability, just nature-based solutions, just transition and advocacy at COP27 and beyond⁵.

The Agenda will guide the work of the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance and its partners. Launched in March 2022, the Alliance brings together over 40 leading civil society organisations (community-based organisations and national and regional non-governmental organisations), academic and research institutions, creatives, individual champions and activists, media and other non-state actors and their networks working across different sectors and aspects of climate justice.

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) serves as the secretariat and convenor of the Alliance. Initial work is being supported by the Open Society Foundations.

⁵ See reports of the Set the Agenda dialogue series at <https://canari.org/voices-for-just-resilient-covid-recovery/>



Priority Areas



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1.5°C Ambition

CURB EMISSIONS TO LIMIT GLOBAL TEMPERATURE INCREASE TO 1.5°C

a. Context and Rationale

Climate change poses an existential threat to Caribbean people and their way of life, economic sectors and natural ecosystems. Adverse impacts are already being felt through coastal erosion due to sea level rise, coral bleaching and marine ecosystem damage with higher sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification, water shortages due to rainfall variability and saltwater intrusion, and more intense hurricanes and storms among others⁶. If greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, and global temperature exceeds 1.5°C, the impacts on Caribbean countries are estimated to be US\$11 billion by 2025 and US\$22 billion by 2050⁷. This is despite the fact that Caribbean and other SIDS have contributed the least to global emissions.

Urgent action and strengthened commitments are needed from the world's largest economies and emitters, especially the G20 that account for around 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions^{8,9}, to limit global temperature to 1.5°C and tackle the climate crisis. Current pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Paris Agreement and legally binding net zero targets are far from sufficient. These put us on a pathway to 2.4°C warming by 2100.

6 Mycoo, M., et al. 2022. Small Islands. In: Pörtner, H.-O., et al. (eds.). Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_Chapter15.pdf

7 Bueno, R. et al. 2008. The Caribbean and Climate Change: The Costs of Inaction. Stockholm Environment Institute, US Centre and Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University.

8 Climate Analytics and World Resources Institute. 2021. Closing the gap: the impact of G20 climate commitments on limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C. https://files.wri.org/d8/s3fs-public/2021-09/closing-the-gap-impact-g20-climate-commitments-limiting-global-temperature-rise-1-5c.pdf?VersionId=RIUJyvgmgudRbZDDTG_x_nzcG57JMWd

9 United Nations Environment Programme. 2021. Emissions Gap Report 2021: The Heat is On – A world of Climate Promises Not Yet Delivered. <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2021>

b. Priorities for Action

The key priorities for limiting global temperature to 1.5°C to tackle the climate crisis include:

National and regional levels

- Caribbean governments reduce their greenhouse gas emissions consistent with a 1.5°C pathway and update Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) accordingly.
- Caribbean governments upgrade and build more climate resilient and sustainable electric grids and transport systems, including a focus on decentralised renewable energy generation, energy/fuel efficiency and deployment of electric vehicles for public transport and personal use.
- Governments, private sector and development partners invest in the blue-green economy and low-carbon, resilient development, especially for the energy, construction, tourism and transport sectors, and shift away from fossil fuels and extractive industries that drive emissions and environmental loss and degradation.
- Governments and the private sector implement training and upskilling programmes to allow the workforce, including the most vulnerable and marginalised, to transition to decent, safe and well-paying jobs in renewable energy and other climate resilient-focused sectors.
- Governments, civil society and the private sector support holistic urban planning to build the resilience of cities and towns across the Caribbean, taking into account mitigation and adaptation needs.

Global level

- Parties to the UNFCCC set ambitious emissions targets for 2025 and reaching net zero by 2050 to limit global temperature to 1.5°C. In particular, the G20 countries update and align their 2025 NDCs to a 1.5°C compatible emissions pathway and commit to net zero emissions by 2050, with G7 countries taking the lead based on their historical contributions.
- Parties to the UNFCCC implement actions to phase out unabated fossil fuels during this decade to set us on an achievable and robust pathway to net zero emissions. This includes the G20 countries immediately putting a stop to fossil fuel industry subsidies, as they have done to the tune of US\$5.1 trillion between 2015 and 2022^{10, 11}.
- Parties to the UNFCCC implement actions to triple the global installed capacity for clean, renewable energy and double energy efficiency by 2030 to support the low-carbon energy transition, with the G7 and other countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) providing financing and technology transfer to developing countries to ensure equitable access and affordable energy.
- Parties to the UNFCCC develop and implement a global carbon tax or carbon pricing scheme to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the world's largest economies and emitters.
- Governments, the private sector and development partners prioritise interventions in Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation consistent with a 1.5°C compatible emissions pathway and support conservation and sustainable management of forests to enhance carbon storage, biodiversity and livelihood benefits for forest-dependent communities. These interventions must focus on globally important tropical rainforests and dry forests, mangroves and peatlands and adopt a gender-responsive and inclusive approach.
- Aviation, shipping and construction industries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in compliance with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

¹⁰ BloombergNEF. 2021. Climate Policy Factbook. https://assets.bbhub.io/professional/sites/24/BNEF-Climate-Policy-Factbook_FINAL.pdf

¹¹ IISD. 2023. Fanning the Flames: G20 provides record financial support for fossil fuels. <https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/fanning-flames-g20-support-of-fossil-fuels>

Our key messages on limiting global temperature to 1.5°C are:

- 1.5°C to stay alive
- The G20, especially the G7, must step up actions and set ambitious emissions targets in line with 1.5°C ambition for 2025
- Net zero by 2050
- Stop subsidies for fossil fuels now
- Shift away from fossil fuels and extractive industries that drive emissions and environmental destruction
- More investment and exploration into affordable renewable energy and low-emission and resilient transport
- Mitigation actions must centre around the just transition, recognising that Caribbean people and livelihoods are heavily involved in high-emission tourism and extractive industries and rooted in colonisation
- Engage and invest in youth, women, Indigenous and rural communities and other vulnerable groups in designing and delivering mitigation actions



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Adaptation and Loss and Damage

SCALE UP LOCALLY-LED SOLUTIONS FOR ADAPTATION AND LOSS AND DAMAGE THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF FRONTLINE AND HIGHLY VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

a. Context and Rationale

Adaptation is a key focus for Caribbean SIDS recognising that our communities, economic sectors, livelihoods and natural ecosystems are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This includes efforts to adjust to actual or potential impacts, moderate harm or take advantage of opportunities in both socio-economic and natural systems. In particular, adaptation must be locally specific and frontline communities need to be integrally involved from the outset to develop viable solutions.

Beyond adaptation, loss and damage is a serious concern as climate change increasingly poses an existential threat undermining the ability of Caribbean people to live on our islands. Loss and damage is already being experienced due to climate extremes, such as hurricanes, and slow-onset events, such as sea level rise, in Caribbean SIDS. These losses are often concentrated in communities that are most vulnerable and least able to cope with these impacts, for example, low-income households that are least able to cope with the impacts of hurricanes as they have no insurance or savings and limited government support. Such loss and damage can be economic or non-economic. Economic loss and damage relates to harms affecting resources, goods and services that are commonly traded in markets e.g. infrastructure, crop yields and tourism losses. Non-economic loss and damage can be difficult to quantify and monetise, but includes health impacts, loss of culture, loss of biodiversity and loss of territory.

In addressing adaptation and loss and damage, and ensuring climate justice, it is critical that we focus on:

- The meaningful participation and inclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups in decision-making processes. Frontline communities, including households, resource users and enterprises, that are experiencing climate change impacts are integrally involved in decision-making about adaptation and loss and damage and developing locally appropriate solutions rather than just being the end users.

- The fair distribution of resources where the most vulnerable communities receive the benefits of adaptation and addressing loss and damage.
- Those responsible for causing climate change are also responsible for supporting adaptation, addressing loss and damage and repairing harms.

b. Priorities for Action

National and Regional Levels

Adaptation

- Governments, private sector and development partners support scaling up of **locally-led adaptation** that empowers local actors, including Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants and frontline communities, enterprises and resource users like small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, to have a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods and to design and implement solutions. This includes:
 - Capacity building of local actors, including technical capacity building on adaptation tools and practices and organisational capacity building as strong local organisations are needed to implement adaptation over the long-term;
 - Documenting and sharing best practices and innovations to support scale-up and replication; and
 - Financing that is grant-based, predictable and transparent, with delivery mechanisms in place to ensure that funds are channelled to the local level to meet the needs of frontline communities, including for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, and build resilient livelihoods and ecosystems.
- Governments, civil society and the private sector **integrate ecosystem-based solutions** as part of adaptation and building local resilience. Natural ecosystems have intrinsic value, as well as serving as natural defences and being critical to major economic sectors in the Caribbean region, including tourism, agriculture and fisheries, and the livelihoods of rural and Indigenous communities. Investing in conserving, sustainably managing and restoring ecosystems can provide multiple benefits in terms of building ecological, economic and social resilience as well as mitigation co-benefits through carbon sequestration by forests and mangroves.
- Governments, civil society and the private sector engage in participatory research and **integrate Indigenous, local and cultural knowledge** to provide relevant data for planning and decision-making and support an evidence-based approach.
- National and local governments improve **land use and marine spatial planning** at community and national levels to guide adaptation and resilient development, with a focus on water, energy and food security and addressing climate hazards such as coastal erosion, drought and flooding.
- Governments and civil society organisations raise awareness among vulnerable communities on the linkages between adaptation and poverty eradication and need for balance between addressing socio-economic needs and environmental needs and ensuring sustainability and resilience.
- Governments strengthen and formalise **multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms** on climate change in order to enhance early warning, research and monitoring capacity at national and regional levels.

Loss and damage

- Governments, private sector and development partners ensure **access to funding for loss and damage** that is separate from other forms of climate finance at community and national levels through modalities that are fit for purpose, including grants rather than loans, and people-centred, giving vulnerable and affected communities voice in decision-making.
- Governments, civil society organisations and development partners **build capacity to implement sustainable solutions for recovery and resilience building** at the community and grassroots levels, so affected communities can understand their own needs, conduct proper assessments and develop relevant solutions.

- Governments, civil society organisations and development partners strengthen systems for **participatory research, monitoring and evaluation** to better understand loss and damage in frontline communities and the effectiveness of recovery efforts and financing, especially for the most vulnerable and affected groups including women and children.

Global level

- Parties to the UNFCCC integrate locally-led adaptation into the Global Goal on Adaptation, which was established under the Paris Agreement, with the objective to effectively track and measure progress aligned with the Principles for Locally-led Adaptation¹² and account for the quantity and quality of climate finance allocated. It is also important that the Global Goal reflects national and local realities and needs in Caribbean SIDS.
- Parties to the UNFCCC enable active engagement of frontline communities and civil society organisations from Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries in the 2-year Glasgow-Sharma El-Sheikh (GlaSS) work programme and the Global Goal on Adaptation Framework.
- Parties to the UNFCCC establish and resource urgently the finance facility to provide additional and dedicated finance to address loss and damage, which is separate and apart from mitigation and adaptation finance, that was agreed at COP27. This facility must be fit for purpose and readily accessible at the national and sub-national levels to support frontline communities.
- Parties to the UNFCCC fully operationalise the Warsaw Mechanism and the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage as effective mechanisms to catalyse and deliver the required technical assistance to Caribbean SIDS and other vulnerable countries.
- Parties to the UNFCCC ensure adequate and separate financing for adaptation and loss and damage in setting the new collective quantified goal for climate finance, including increased support for Caribbean SIDS and locally-led solutions for adaptation and loss and damage.

Our key messages for fair and just outcomes in adaptation and addressing loss and damage are:

- Climate adaptation is everyone's business
- Support the most vulnerable and empower them through capacity building and technical support
- Fortify our mangroves and reefs as our first line of defence, and the foundation of local livelihoods
- Integrate Indigenous and local knowledge as part of a holistic, evidence-based approach
- 'Build back better' through equity, justice and balanced development
- Dedicated and separate funding for adaptation and loss and damage

¹² Global Commission on Adaptation. 2021. Principles for Locally Led Adaptation Action. <https://gca.org/reports/principles-for-locally-led-adaptation-action/>



Climate Finance

IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND DELIVERY OF CLIMATE FINANCE FOR FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES, SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AS PART OF A 'WHOLE OF SOCIETY' APPROACH

a. Context and Rationale

Despite high vulnerability to climate change, and the need for financial and technical support to deliver emissions reductions rapidly and adapt and build their resilience to the unavoidable climate change impacts that are already underway, Caribbean SIDS have limited access to climate finance. Climate finance here is defined as local, national or international financing that supports adaptation, loss and damage and mitigation to address climate change, which can be drawn from public, private or alternative sources¹³.

Caribbean countries have submitted their NDCs, which identify the cumulative climate mitigation and adaptation actions and financing needs of these countries between 2015 and 2030. The size of the financing needs ranges from 10% of 2021 GDP in Trinidad and Tobago to 175% of 2021 GDP in Haiti¹⁴. However, no country has received more than 26% of total financing in pledges from donors between 2010-2020, and disbursements lag even further behind commitments¹⁴.

Further, frontline communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Caribbean face specific challenges in accessing and delivering climate finance and contributing to a 'whole of society' approach with the public and private sector¹⁵. CSOs, community groups and enterprises typically work with small budgets and face capacity constraints, particularly around financial management, reporting and auditing. They often lack awareness and

¹³ UNFCCC, n.d. Introduction to climate finance. <https://unfccc.int/topics/introduction-to-climate-finance>

¹⁴ Mohan, P.S. 2022. Implementing nationally determined contributions under the Paris agreement: An assessment of climate finance in Caribbean small island developing states.

¹⁵ Crawford, A. et al. 2021. Enhancing Caribbean Civil Society's Access and Readiness for Climate Finance: Scoping Report. https://canari.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Enhancing-Caribbean-Civil-Society-Access-to-Climate-Finance-Report_10.2021.pdf

understanding of available climate finance options as well as the expertise needed to develop and submit funding proposals. The application processes and requirements for large multi-lateral funds, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund (AF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF), are also onerous and cost- and time-intensive. Civil society engagement with the public and private sector in defining and delivering climate policy and investments is also ad hoc.

The public debt crisis in the Caribbean also significantly limits public sector investment and support to CSOs and frontline communities. Average public debt has widened significantly, rising to 84.1% of GDP in 2021, with 13 out of 15 economies in the CARICOM Member States carrying debt at or above the internationally accepted debt threshold of 60%¹⁶. Eight of these 15 economies hold the majority of their debt as external debt, with debt service payments as a percent of government revenue averaging 23.8% in 2021¹⁴. Antigua and Barbuda had the highest debt service levels in the region in 2021 at 76.6% of government revenue¹⁴. This unsustainably high debt reduces the fiscal space required to sufficiently achieve low-carbon, resilient and sustainable development, address unexpected major economic shocks and invest for the future.

Public debt is compounded by disasters related to climate change itself. In 2017, damage and loss to Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis due to hurricanes were in the excess of US\$1.7 billion¹⁷. It is estimated that damage and loss costs of climate change in the Caribbean are estimated to be US\$11 billion by 2025 and US\$22 billion by 2050¹⁸. In the wake of disasters, Caribbean governments have no choice but to increase public spending to support recovery and reconstruction efforts. Such expenditures are often funded by external debt which can grow rapidly.

b. Priorities for Action

National and Regional Levels

Access to climate finance

In scaling up climate finance, it is critical that this is mainly grant-based, predictable, transparent and the mechanisms are in place to ensure that these funds are channelled to the local level to meet the needs of frontline communities, including for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, and build resilient livelihoods and ecosystems. This must include finance to strengthen the capacity and actions of frontline communities, enterprises and civil society organisations to adapt and build their resilience.

Key priorities include:

- Governments, private sector and development partners scale up **finance for locally-led climate action** that empowers local actors, including Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants and frontline communities, enterprises and resource users like small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, to have a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods and to design and implement adaptation and mitigation solutions. This includes increasing the amount of financing available to these groups, and ensuring it is grant-based, predictable and transparent.
- Governments, private sector and development partners expand **delivery mechanisms**, including for small grants (up to US\$50,000) and medium size grants (US\$50,000-1,000,000) to ensure funding is available for delivering meaningful climate action at the local level to meet the needs of frontline communities and CSOs. This includes enhancing the role of local intermediaries (including regional and national CSOs) in channelling resources to the local level.
- Funders and their intermediaries improve **readiness and capacity building support for CSOs** to strengthen their human resources, policies and systems, including for financial management and

16 UN Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC). 2023. Economic Survey of the Caribbean 2022. <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48693-economic-survey-caribbean-2022>

17 UNECLAC. 2020. Disaster assessment portal. <https://www.cepal.org/en/headquarters-and-offices/eclac-caribbean/disaster-assessment/disaster-assessment-portal>

18 Bueno, R. et al. 2008. The Caribbean and Climate Change: The Costs of Inaction. Stockholm Environment Institute, US Centre and Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University.

monitoring and evaluation to ensure sustainability of impacts, to effectively access and deliver climate finance at the local level.

- Governments, civil society and the private sector facilitate **integration of citizen science and local and Indigenous knowledge** to strengthen climate rationale and inform climate-related projects/programmes.
- Governments, private sector and development partners enable a more gender equitable and socially inclusive approach in **engaging stakeholders throughout the project cycle**, including CSOs, local communities and small and micro enterprises, from design to implementation to monitoring and evaluation of climate actions.
- Governments, civil society and funders strengthen their **coordination mechanisms** to enable inclusive and accountable climate decision-making and financing at national and regional levels.
- The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and relevant national entities provide **risk financing (e.g. micro-insurance and livelihood protection schemes) that addresses the needs of frontline communities**, local resource users like small-scale farmers and fisherfolk and small and micro enterprises, including women-led enterprises.
- Governments, funders and development partners foster **innovation through collaboration and knowledge sharing** within and between Caribbean SIDS to allow shift from conventional and prescriptive ways of how we access and deliver climate finance. This includes focusing on cross cutting issues (e.g. human rights, governance, gender etc.) in the delivery of and access to climate finance.
- Governments, funders and development partners recognise that climate finance is not a handout, but part of restorative and reparative justice for the region.

Debt Sustainability

It is critical to address the public debt crisis in the Caribbean as part of efforts to improve access and delivery of climate finance. Debt cancellation, as well as suspension or rescheduling, must be considered as key components of an overall restructuring of public debt. Debt-for-climate swaps and other innovative financing tools, such as green and blue bonds, also need to be explored as an alternative source of climate finance for Caribbean SIDS with a focus on ensuring fair and just outcomes for frontline communities.



Coalition for Forests members advocating to increase the forest conservation budget and promote participatory budgeting by the Government of Jamaica. Credit: CANARI

Key priorities include:

- The Caribbean Development Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and their partners **engage CSOs and frontline communities in the development of the proposed Caribbean Resilience Fund** as a special purpose financing vehicle intended to leverage long-term, low-cost development financing, including for debt restructuring and liquidity enhancement, and provide resources for investment in adaptation and mitigation.
- Caribbean governments identify and implement **viable and socially inclusive solutions to reduce high levels of public debt**, including innovative modalities such as debt-for-nature and debt-for-climate swaps, green and blue bonds, and impact investing.
- Caribbean governments and other recipients of funds, including from debt-for-climate swaps and bonds, ensure **accountability** and that funds are utilised effectively and distributed fairly for climate action and building resilience.
- Caribbean governments facilitate **participatory budgeting** with civil society and other non-state actors and ensure national budget systems are climate proofed and serve as a tool for tracking climate finance at the national level.
- **National and regional development banks expand their lending portfolios** to focus on building climate resilience and encouraging private sector to set up new mechanisms for funding climate mitigation, adaptation and reconstruction after climate-related disasters, including **public-private-civil society partnerships**.

Global level

- Developed countries fulfil their promise of US\$100 billion annually from 2020 through to 2025 under the Paris Agreement to scale up international public finance for climate action in developing countries.
- Funders, including multi-lateral and bi-lateral funding agencies, double financing for adaptation by 2025 and ensure that at least 25% of total adaptation finance supports locally-led adaptation in Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries. This must include streamlining access to finance and support strengthening capacity and actions of frontline communities, enterprises and civil society organisations to adapt and build their resilience.
- Parties to the UNFCCC adopt a roadmap and work plan at COP28 for setting and delivering the new collective quantified goal for climate finance beyond 2025, recognising the need to mobilise trillions rather than billions to achieve the 1.5°C goal and low-carbon and resilient transformation. This new climate finance goal must include increased support for Caribbean SIDS and locally-led solutions for adaptation and loss and damage.
- Parties to the UNFCCC operationalise and resource urgently the financing facility that was agreed at COP27 to provide additional and dedicated finance to address loss and damage, which is separate and apart from mitigation and adaptation finance. This facility must be fit for purpose and readily accessible at the national and sub-national levels to support frontline communities.
- Funders, especially multi-lateral development banks and funds, reform the structure of climate and development finance, with an emphasis on grants rather than loans for Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries and debt forgiveness rather than debt relief.
- Multi-lateral development banks and other lenders amend the terms and conditions of loans and interest and principal repayments to prevent Caribbean SIDS and other developing nations spiralling into a debt crisis when borrowing is increased due to successive disasters like floods, droughts and tropical storms and hurricanes, for instance as outlined in the Bridgetown Initiative¹⁹.
- Official creditors ensure comprehensive debt relief is granted to Caribbean SIDS with an unsustainable debt burden.
- The International Monetary Fund, World Bank and regional development banks recognise their key role and offer loan guarantees and risk financing for liability management operations.

Our key messages for improved climate finance access and delivery in Caribbean SIDS are:

- Grants, not loans
- No more broken promises - US\$100 billion annually through to 2025 to support climate action in developing countries
- Double finance for adaptation by 2025 to ensure balance with mitigation finance
- At least 25% of total adaptation finance supports locally-led adaptation in SIDS and other developing countries
- Urgency for action requires speedy and simplified access to climate finance
- Debt forgiveness first
- Concessional and affordable financing should be a priority
- Climate reparations with no strings attached
- Meaningful participation and accountability by governments and organisations that facilitate debt-for-climate swaps and other modalities is key

¹⁹ See <https://www.foreign.gov.bb/the-2022-barbados-agenda/>



Just Nature-based Solutions

SCALE UP AND INTEGRATE JUST, NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS TO BUILD LOCAL RESILIENCE

a. Context and Rationale

Nature-based solutions (NbS) can be defined as: “actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits”²⁰. These solutions include biodiversity-friendly, environmentally sustainable and ecosystem-based approaches to mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk management.

Although NbS are increasingly endorsed by multilateral environmental agreements and international and regional organisations as a key strategy to help people address the adverse impacts of climate change, the concept is still evolving and not fully understood or being adopted in the Caribbean. Further challenges encountered in implementing NBS include:

- Sustainability and ongoing buy-in from community participants can be a challenge. Careful planning and training is required before the project gets underway to ensure that participants are fully aware and in tune with its goals.
- Increased and ongoing impacts of climate change that may damage or restrict efforts. For example, coral cultivation projects may be harmed by a storm, or by bleaching and other diseases and degradation from changing sea surface temperatures and acidity levels.
- Funding structures and implementation can exacerbate existing inequalities, whether inadvertently or deliberately. Efforts must be designed to address trade-offs and ensure a ‘low regrets’ approach where social equity and justice are improved or maintained.

²⁰ United Nations Environment Programme (2020). The Economics of Nature-based Solutions: Current Status and Future Priorities. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/01/economics_of_nbs.pdf

- Possible “land grabs” and unsustainable practices can undermine efforts. While encouraging NbS, proponents should not infringe on others’ rights in terms of obtaining resources, including land or local access to resource use.
- Managing expectations given the longer timeframe for expected results to be achieved with NbS. For example, mangrove regrowth to support coastal protection may take 5-10 years before tangible results are realised in terms of reduced erosion or livelihood co-benefits.
- Misuse of the concept of NbS or “greenwashing” by corporate or other development interests. What counts as NbS and the motivations of various interests in supporting such efforts must be carefully considered to ensure outcomes are ecologically sound, just and inclusive.

To ensure fair and just outcomes, five key principles must be taken into account in nature-based solutions: ensure that design, governance and implementation processes are inclusive and transparent; tackle root causes of marginalization, inequality and injustice at all stages; limit the creation of economic and non-economic losses, and avoid the unjust redistribution of risks and costs; prioritise interventions for the most at-risk places and communities; and devise and use valuation and measurement tools that assess social and political change and consequences²¹.

b. Priorities for Action

The following priorities for action have been identified drawing on the five principles at the national, regional and global levels.

National and Regional Levels

- Resource managers, including from the public and private sector and civil society organisations, preserve and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services that support adaptation to adverse climate change impacts and/or mitigation as carbon sinks using a locally-led and participatory process. This includes:
 - Conservation of intact forest, coastal and marine biodiversity and ecosystems, with a focus on endemic, native and threatened species, through establishment of protected/managed areas and participatory management that actively involves local communities and resource users;
 - Restoration of forest, rural and marine ecosystems and their ecosystem services, with particular attention paid to those that are highly degraded by human activities as well as by climate change, using locally-led and participatory processes; and
 - Sustainable resource use and management that supports local livelihoods and enterprises in sectors, especially sectors linked to the circular and blue-green economy.



Community replanting of mangroves in northern Haiti. Credit: FoProBiM

21 Boyland, M. et al. 2022. Principles for just and equitable nature-based solutions. Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) discussion brief. <https://www.sei.org/publications/principles-for-just-nature-based-solutions/>

- Resource managers use sustainable, natural and endemic materials in implementing NbS, without causing any ecological impacts or imbalance in the process.
- Governments, private sector and development partners ensure the most vulnerable (e.g. unemployed youth, single female-headed households, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, elderly, LGBTQIA+ community) and wider civil society have a voice and are effectively engaged in planning and decision-making on NbS.
- Governments, civil society organisations and development partners build the capacity of local communities and resource users and managers to effectively design, implement and monitor and evaluate NbS for their context, including through training of trainers, information exchanges, sharing case studies and lessons learned and other learning opportunities (e.g. scholarships to study environmental engineering, conservation, natural sciences and related subjects that will enhance NbS).
- Governments, civil society organisations and development partners enhance the well-being of vulnerable communities, including improvements in livelihoods, health, family and social welfare, crime reduction and security, to enable just NbS.
- Governments, civil society organisations and development partners ensure a broad focus on NbS in both urban and rural areas that are vulnerable and at-risk.
- Governments, civil society, private sector and technical agencies conduct participatory research, monitoring and evaluation on NbS at national and regional levels to better understand what solutions are most effective for the Caribbean, how solutions may be adapted for different local contexts, and limits to their application in light of potential 2°C or more warming.
- Governments develop/update and enforce environmental policies, laws and regulations to better enable just NbS and effective enforcement at the national level, ensuring alignment with the Escazú Agreement²².
- Governments, private sector and funders invest in just NbS using grant-based funding and other innovative modalities, such as debt-for-nature and debt-for-climate swaps, green and blue bonds, and impact investing, to support long-term goals.
- Civil society organisations and activists enhance public awareness and advocacy on the right to a clean and healthy environment as part of a rights-based and earth-centred approach, linkages between climate change and biodiversity and the importance of just NbS.
- Governments, civil society and development partners enhance education, especially for children and youth, on climate change, biodiversity, stewardship and NbS and promote a shift from a 'consumerist mindset' to more sustainable lifestyle (including reducing/eliminating plastics use, recycling and engaging in the circular and blue-green economy).
- Governments, civil society and development partners operationalise National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to support conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services as the basis for NbS.

Global level

- Parties to the UNFCCC prioritise and implement NbS for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forest, coastal and marine ecosystems to reduce emissions consistent with 1.5°C compatible emissions pathway and enhance carbon storage, biodiversity and livelihood benefits for natural resource-dependent communities. In particular, these solutions must be aligned with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Agenda 2030 and the SDGs to ensure pro-poor, just and equitable outcomes.
- Government, private sector and development partners coordinate and ensure alignment between their climate commitments, including under the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for nature-positive climate actions.

²² See <https://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>

Our key messages for just NbS are:

- Just solutions - empower communities, support the most vulnerable
- How do we envision our environment in 5, 10, 20 years? Let's protect it for the future
- Protect our planet, our prosperity, our people
- Protect our forests for the birds, wetlands for the fish (focus on biodiversity/species)
- Invest in nature, invest in our livelihoods
- We must use our natural resources sustainably



Just Transition

SUPPORT A JUST TRANSITION FOR PRO-POOR, INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

a. Context and Rationale

The idea of a just transition has its origins in grassroots campaigns to connect worker and trade union battles with environmental action and concern for environmental justice²³. Through several resolutions in the late 1990s, international union federations adopted and started to advocate for the just transition of the workforce. However, this language didn't appear in the international climate sphere until Cancun's COP16 agreements in 2010²⁴. Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the establishment of decent and quality jobs in accordance with nationally determined development priorities, the Paris Agreement's Preamble was amended in 2015 to include a work-centred reference to just transition²⁵. A comprehensive focus on the social implications of climate action and the significance of integrating a fair transition into national and international policy frameworks for climate change, economic development and social inclusion was advanced in the 2021 negotiations at COP26 in Glasgow and 2022 negotiations at COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh:

- The final COP26 agreement, known as the "Glasgow Pact," makes mention of social and environmental safeguards, as well as human rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights and gender equality²⁶.
- The Sharm El Sheikh Implementation Plan referred to the routes to a just and equitable transition at COP27²⁷.

23 <https://www.ihrb.org/focus-areas/just-transitions/report-just-transitions-for-all>

24 "Framework Convention on Climate Change" FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, Part I, para. 10, and Part E, fourth recital (Mar 2011), at <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

25 Paris Agreement, Preamble (2015) at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

26 UNFCCC "Glasgow Climate Pact" (Nov 2021) at: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-parisagreement/the-glasgow-climate-pact-key-outcomes-from-cop26>

27 UNFCCC "Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan" (20 Nov 2022) https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2022_L21_revised_adv.pdf

More recently, the just transition has been taken to incorporate key terms – sustainable development, justice and equity. These terms are defined contextually and should be understood from the local perspective and within the historical context. For the Caribbean, the just transition can mean system transformations ranging from the use of ecosystem-based approaches more generally to preserving Indigenous and local practices and cultures in respect to land use and sustainability and re-orienting economic development and the workforce to low-carbon, resilient development and the blue-green economy.

Noting that the global transition to low emissions presents opportunities and challenges for sustainable economic development and the eradication of poverty in Caribbean SIDS, it is key that solutions to the climate crisis are founded on meaningful and effective social dialogue and participation of all stakeholders. These solutions must also recognise the special circumstances of Caribbean SIDS with small economies that are reliant on a few sectors and highly vulnerable to external shocks and high indebtedness. As posited by thought leader, Steve Maximay, Science Based Initiatives: “A just transition with respect to climate change implies that citizens disadvantaged by climate adaptation and mitigation actions will be buffered through a series of socio-economic programmes that protect livelihoods. The just transition must be people-centred”²⁸. Furthermore, a degree of self-determination and an understanding that the adjustments advocated for in the pursuit of lower carbon emissions/emissions-free development are for the benefit of our populations, starting with the most disadvantaged in our communities, are necessary for a just transition.

However, there are challenges for a just transition in the Caribbean. These include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of a common understanding and consensus on what is a just transition
- narrow resource bases and lack of financial resources
- limited data availability and misinformation with respect to the cost of a just transition
- coordination and communication gaps
- lack of coordinated and effective stakeholder engagement
- issues of social exclusion, inequality and marginalization
- absence of legislative frameworks
- high initial investment costs and risks of transition
- limited focus on re-allocation of legal resources to leverage the benefits of just transition

b. Priorities for Action

National and regional levels

Within the Caribbean region, a just transition must be seen as all encompassing and layered over several socio-economic levels. Key priorities in ensuring that the just transition include:

- Caribbean governments and the private sector **develop and implement reskilling and upskilling strategies** which account for all types of workers and support new jobs, including the development of the ‘green collar’ workforce, using a bottom-up approach.
- Caribbean governments **develop and implement just transition policies and plans** at the national level to create an enabling institutional environment, including fostering coherence with climate mitigation policies and actions and coordination with the relevant bodies.
- Governments and the private sector **address gender equity and social inclusion considerations and existing biases within the workforce** and various economic sectors.
- Governments, private sector and development partners **establish and implement compensatory funds and social protection schemes for income loss** when asking persons to transition from high emission/polluting sectors with higher incomes to perceived lower income sectors and jobs.
- Regional agencies, governments, civil society and the private sector **develop a regional inventory and coordination platform on the just transition**, including defining the concept, setting guidelines and sharing best practices and experiences. This includes utilising the technical dialogue findings of the

²⁸ This quote is from a virtual dialogue on “Set the Agenda: Just Transition and Climate Change”, hosted by Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance on September 7, 2022.

Global Stocktake of the implementation of the Paris Agreement to focus on overcoming the challenges of just transition.

- Regional agencies, governments and the private sector identify clearly how trade policy and agreements can be used in the service of the sustainable development goals, inclusive of the just transition, and update these accordingly.
- Governments, private sector and academic/research institutes **invest in and protect intellectual property for innovative solutions to support the development of new jobs and technologies** for the just transition.
- Governments, private sector and funders **leverage investments in COVID-19 recovery** and ensure new investments address inequities and support a just, sustainable and resilient economic transition.
- Governments, private sector and development partners ensure that the transition delivers ‘just outcomes’ where socio-economic improvement is delivered to all in society, including through **participatory monitoring and evaluation to track progress and further reporting in NDCs and other national communications.**

Global level

- Parties to the UNFCCC enable active engagement of frontline communities and civil society organisations from Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries in the Just Transition work programme to create decent, safe and quality jobs as part of low-carbon and resilient development, and ensure the programme reflects national and local realities and priorities in Caribbean SIDS.
- G7 and other OECD countries provide international public finance and help leverage private investment to support a just transition in Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries by 2030.

Our key messages for a just transition in the Caribbean include:

- Just transition must be participatory, cross-sectoral and collaborative - from decision-making to processes and policies
- Avoid un-managed transitions
- Fairness to all workers
- Contextually appropriate technologies and solutions are key, centring the needs of the most marginalised and promote equity in the distribution of benefits
- In the transition, the notion of co-ownership must exist (where communities are not only being consulted but co-owning the programmes/policies)
- Financial restructuring must consider the just transition, adaptation and future needs
- The transition must be monitored and evaluated to track progress and further reported in NDCs
- Governments should develop sector specific policies - not only for the energy sector but also extractive, agriculture and fisheries, tourism and other important sectors
- G7 must contribute and unlock the necessary finance to support just transitions in Caribbean and other developing countries



Gender Equity and Justice

PROMOTE GENDER EQUITY, INCLUDING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

a. Context and Rationale

Climate change affects everyone, however, not everyone is impacted the same. Women, men, girls, boys and persons of non-binary gender identities are differently impacted by climate change and related disasters across the region. Responses to these impacts, at the policy level or on the ground in frontline communities, must therefore be gender-responsive and inclusive.

In many contexts, women and girls are disadvantaged as a result of systemic inequities and biases related to their roles, responsibilities and the opportunities that are available to them. Women who have other characteristics that lead to social marginalisation – such as race, age, disability or sexual orientation – often require specific attention to ensure gender equity and justice in their treatment. Further, global research shows that 1 in 3 women, and in Guyana and other Caribbean SIDS 1 in 2 women, will experience some form of gender-based violence in their lifetimes²⁹. In times of crisis, including climate and economic shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic, these rates of violence may even increase. As Drs. Katharine Wilkinson and Ayana Johnson argue, “Climate feminism is exactly what we need because our planetary crisis has never been gender-neutral.”³⁰

These concerns also apply to people of non-binary gender identities and other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities and LGBTQIA+ persons. Socially inclusive approaches are key, taking into account the representation of various people with socio-cultural characteristics that influence their vulnerability to climate change, their capacity to engage and the benefits they receive from climate action.

29 World Health Organisation. 2021. Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/341337>

30 Johnson, A.E. and Wilkinson, K. (eds). 2020. All we can save: Truth, Courage and Solutions for the Climate Crisis.

b. Priorities for Action

Increasing Awareness and Action for Climate, Gender and Social Justice

To improve gender and social justice, it is crucial that all stakeholders have a basic understanding of climate change and issues of gender equity and equality and social inclusion and can appreciate the intersection of these key issues. It is also important for stakeholders in the climate justice and gender and social justice spheres to collaborate and integrate their efforts.

Key priorities include:

- Caribbean governments, private sector, civil society and research institutions support **citizen science and participatory monitoring to collect gender-disaggregated and other socio-economic data** and assess the status of climate and gender justice in all sectors, especially the climate-sensitive agriculture and fisheries, energy and tourism sectors. This process should focus on engaging women, girls and other vulnerable groups.
- Caribbean governments, civil society and the private sector **facilitate dialogue, networking and alliance building on climate and gender justice** in the region, including through convening an annual Caribbean Women for Climate Justice conference and other fora.
- Governments, CSOs and research institutions support **capacity building on connections between climate, gender and social justice** from a Caribbean perspective to build the knowledge and skills of CSOs, grassroots activists, frontline communities and other non-state actors. This includes:
 - Online training courses in partnership with a university or other accredited institution.
 - A Co-Mentorship Programme on Climate and Gender Justice for individual activists and interested organisations engaged in this field.
 - Mapping and creating an online, open access database of grassroots and national-level organisations focused on gender and social justice issues (e.g. gender-based violence, reproductive access, refugees, etc.) in each Caribbean country and working with these organisations to make the connection with climate justice and promote an integrated approach.
- Civil society and development partners **document and share best practices and innovations that integrate climate, gender and social justice**, including via publishing an anthology of Caribbean short stories, poems, essays and other creative works (e.g. visual arts) covering climate justice and gender justice and creating a bibliography of existing work in this area.
- Governments, CSOs and the private sector improve **inclusion of persons with disabilities, youth, Indigenous and Afro-descendent communities and the LBGTQIA+ community as active actors in climate justice** in the region through partnerships, enhancing mechanisms for shared decision-making and knowledge sharing, and emphasising the differential needs of these groups.
- Governments, CSOs and the private sector **integrate healing justice as part of climate justice and promoting social inclusion** in the region, taking into account language and cultural diversity and loss, racial and other social inequities and related trauma, and broader well being among other factors.

Integrating climate change and gender policies in the Caribbean

Within various Caribbean countries, there are climate change and gender policies and plans, including National Climate Change Policies, NDCs, National Gender Policies and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to which most countries are signatories. However, climate change policies do not often fully take into account gender considerations and vice versa for gender policies. Given the interconnection of gender and climate change, relevant data and interventions must be reflected in these policies.

Key priorities include:

- Caribbean governments, CSOs and development partners conduct a **gap analysis** of national climate change and gender policies and plans in the region and share findings and recommendations to key policymakers at the national level.
- Caribbean governments **update national climate change policies and plans to include gender considerations**, and gender policies and plans to include climate considerations, including a focus on coordination, enforcement and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

- Caribbean governments enable **inclusion of gender-focused and climate-focused civil society representatives on national coordination mechanisms** that oversee policy and decision-making on climate change and gender, including National Climate Change Committees and CEDAW Committees among others.

Promoting women's empowerment and leadership for climate action

Women's empowerment and resilience are critical for inclusive and just climate action, and resources should be allocated for their capacity-building and strengthening of competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours) necessary to promote gender equity and justice and build their own resilience and of their wider communities. Adequate and targeted financing is also needed to support women and girls to pursue relevant opportunities and address existing inequities in terms of their access to employment, income and financial assets. Improving gender equity further calls for greater participation of women in positions of leadership in all spheres, including government and the private sector.

Key priorities include:

- Caribbean governments, private sector, civil society and research institutions provide **training and upskilling programmes in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and 'blue and green' jobs** for women, girls and other disadvantaged groups.
- Caribbean governments, private sector, civil society and research institutions support **further education and professional development** on climate and gender justice through scholarships, mentorship and internship/fellowship opportunities for women and girls.
- Caribbean governments, private sector, civil society and research institutions create a **community of practice** and facilitate shared learnings among the network of actors and organisations involved in climate and gender justice work across the region.
- Governments, private sector and development partners establish **dedicated funding to support women-led enterprises, women-led CSOs and their grassroots networks** focused on climate justice and gender justice at national and regional levels.
- Governments, private sector and development partners leverage **digital technologies to improve women's access to services and livelihood opportunities** to support climate and gender justice.
- Governments **reform national and sectoral policies and plans related to economic participation and the ownership and control of productive assets** (e.g. land and natural resources) to ensure equitable access and use by women and girls in the region.



Fish vendor cleaning fish on west coast, Barbados. Credit: CANARI

Our key messages for gender equity and social inclusion are:

- Gender Justice = Climate Justice
- Gender equity is linked to a safe, sustainable and equitable future
- Involve the vulnerable – including women and girls, persons with non-binary identities, persons with disabilities, Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities – when decisions are being made about their lives
- Women and girls suffer disproportionately from climate change impacts
- When given the tools, women are powerful agents of transformation
- Data-driven policy and actions are key



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Youth and Intergenerational Equity

ENSURE THE INCLUSION OF YOUTH AND INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY AS PART OF CLIMATE JUSTICE

a. Context and Rationale

The voices and efforts of young people are essential in encouraging locally-led climate actions, gathering resources, and informing national and regional-level climate change responses. Moreover, it is increasingly necessary for climate action to be supported by a climate justice framework which provides a fair and inclusive way of dealing with climate change. Young people are the future of the climate justice movement, and they must be given the chance to actively engage in and shape the fight against climate change.

Caribbean youth are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their limited access to resources and decision-making due to the following:

- **Exclusion** – They are often excluded from opportunities to participate in decision-making on climate change-related activities, and their views and concerns are also often overlooked. Ageism, sexism, language and accessibility barriers have further imposed obstacles to the access of resources and opportunities for these youth, particularly in the disabled and LGBTQIA+ communities where platforms have often been inaccessible.
- **Lack of information** – Many young people are not sufficiently informed about the developments in the climate justice space, nor do they have access to the resources, knowledge and technical expertise that would allow them to make an impact. Key issues such as education and awareness, gender responsiveness, equity and intersectionality must be addressed in order to protect the rights and well-being of young people in the region.
- **Lack of access to climate finance and remuneration** – Despite leading many of the efforts for climate action, young people do not have ready access to funds to effectively undertake the work. Many youth actors end up volunteering and doing work for free and are not properly compensated for their time. In some cases, they are funding the work from their own pockets. The time and creativity of youth who lead climate actions must be seen as valuable and they should be compensated fairly for their work. There is also limited willingness among funders to support youth-led organisations to develop

the capacity and skills to manage funds and to put the necessary measures in place for financial accountability.

- Limited access to international fora on climate change – There is not often ready access for youth in climate action to attend or participate in international meetings and conferences. This is due to lack of funding and limited efforts by governments to include youth in their delegations or to provide opportunity for Caribbean youth to experience and contribute to global dialogues.



Figure 1. Graphic on Youth Priorities for COP27 and Beyond from the virtual regional dialogue on Caribbean Youth Pre-COP27 Climate Justice Conversations.

b. Priorities for Action

Youth are a key group in the fight for climate justice, and there are several priority areas in which young people can be empowered and supported to take action. These include:

- Caribbean governments, CSOs and the private sector support **awareness-raising among youth activists and youth-led organisations and networks on climate justice issues and engage them in interventions**, including direct action projects, to help create a more sustainable and equitable future. This includes setting up thematic or country-specific youth working groups across the Caribbean, creating opportunities for these groups to connect and share information and leveraging regional networks, including the Caribbean Youth Climate Justice Coalition.
- Governments, CSOs and the private sector support **targeted capacity building for youth and youth-led organisations**, including:
 - Training in specific areas such as proposal writing, project management, communications, and advocacy, and setting up and managing a non-profit organisation.
 - General capacity building and training in climate change and climate justice to complement more targeted and specialised skills training.
 - Mentoring of youth in their efforts to make a positive impact on their communities and the wider environment, including through climate justice.

- Governments and the private sector improve **access to finance and resource mobilisation for youth** to engage in climate action. This includes allocating small and medium grants under existing funds for youth-led climate change projects, and designing this grant-making as part of a capacity building process.
- Governments support **involvement of youth in climate change decision-making processes**, including ensuring representation on National Climate Change Committees and other relevant coordination mechanisms at the national levels.
- Governments **simplify processes for registration and formalisation of youth-led groups and networks at the national level**. Simplified registration process or greater support from the relevant government offices would help groups to formalise their operations and access funds more easily, as the expense and bureaucratic requirements for registration are currently a deterrent.
- Governments, CSOs and development partners **establish and maintain an online/hybrid platform for information exchange among youth and youth-led organisations on climate justice issues that is available in multiple languages**. This will better allow for sharing of information and building of community and partnerships on climate justice among the many youth and youth-led groups working across the Caribbean and help sustain youth action.
- Governments, CSOs and research institutions **conduct research on climate change impacts on youth, intergenerational equity and justice in the Caribbean**, including empirical research, and engage interested youth researchers in these efforts and publishing on these themes to document Caribbean experiences.
- Governments, CSOs and development partners **develop and implement a Strategy for Youth Engagement and Advocacy on Climate Justice** that is comprehensive, youth-led and adequately funded to support wide-scale youth engagement, including targeting primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions, and advocacy for integration of climate justice in all relevant policies and sectors at the national and regional levels.
- Governments, CSOs and the private sector **facilitate intergenerational dialogue towards partnerships and reducing mistrust** between young people and those in authority.
- Governments and regional agencies **update policies, laws and regulations to address climate change and the rights of youth** and create an enabling policy and legal environment for justice at national and regional levels.

Our key messages for inclusion of youth and intergenerational equity in climate action in the Caribbean include:

- We must keep 1.5°C goal within reach for a liveable future for the next generations
- Empower youth as the climate leaders of today and tomorrow
- Invest in youth, women, Indigenous people and frontline communities on the ground
- Provide training opportunities for Caribbean youth to harness skills and opportunities for safe and decent work as part of low-carbon and resilient development
- More predictable and patient grant funding needed for youth-led solutions for climate action
- The voices and experiences of youth and other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and LGBTQIA+ community, must be included in developing climate policies, projects and funding mechanisms
- Promote intergenerational justice as an imperative in climate change planning and actions



Rights-based Approach to Climate Justice

A RIGHTS-BASED AND EARTH-CENTRED APPROACH IS CRITICAL TO ENSURE CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED GROUPS, FUTURE GENERATIONS AND A HEALTHY AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL

a. Context and Rationale

The climate crisis poses a grave threat to the ability of present and future generations to enjoy a wide range of human rights - rights to life, food, housing, health, water, self-determination and a healthy environment including a safe climate. It also endangers the territorial existence of several low-lying island states in the Caribbean and other SIDS and threatens to deprive Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities of their traditional territories and sources of livelihood. Communities are becoming uninhabitable because of extreme weather events and slow onset disasters, including drought and rising sea levels, creating a new category of “sacrifice zones”. The climate crisis further exacerbates the challenges faced by vulnerable and marginalised communities, such as women, girls, persons with disabilities, migrants and the LGBTQIA+ community.

The vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS is also shaped by historical processes of colonisation and subordination that make them dependent on extractivist development. This extractivism fuels climate change, while also compromising resilience by destroying key food and water resources. It constitutes a justice issue linked to climate change and human rights abuses.

A rights-based approach provides a conceptual framework for addressing climate change based on international human rights standards and principles, including universality, indivisibility, equality and non-discrimination, participation and accountability. It focuses on addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and outcomes and unjust distributions of power that hinder effective climate action and results in groups of people being

left behind. People are acknowledged as rights holders and fulfilling human rights is the obligation of the duty bearers. The approach focuses on developing the capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations and rights holders to claim their rights. This includes a focus on empowering vulnerable and marginalised communities to take climate action and defend their rights against unsustainable development. It also demands a focus on racial equality, recognising that the climate crisis disproportionately impacts racialized communities such as Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, and climate reparations.

Drawing on the framework for Environmental, Social, Cultural and Economic (ESCE) rights, a rights-based approach further recognises the importance of an earth-centred approach. The rights to a healthy and safe environment are seen as an autonomous right and biodiversity and ecosystems have value in their own rights, independent of human uses.

However, there are challenges that impede a rights-based approach in the region. These include lack of awareness of the linkages between climate change and human rights, the lack of human rights and climate change laws in the Caribbean, and the difficulty in proving causal links for impacts on the ground.

b. Priorities for Action

National and regional levels

There is an urgent need to adopt a rights-based approach in responses to the climate crisis across the region. This should include strengthening climate advocacy and laws to support litigation and other legal tools, defending the rights of vulnerable and marginalised communities and establishing rights to a healthy and safe environment to advance climate justice.

Key priorities include:

- Caribbean governments **recognise the ESCE rights framework and integrate it into legislation and policies** to address climate change and wider environmental concerns³¹. These ESCE rights include the right to health, a healthy environment, food, water, and cultural identity, which are enshrined in treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Caribbean governments take **affirmative measures to prevent human rights harms caused by climate change**, including foreseeable long-term harms.
- Caribbean governments all **sign, ratify and operationalise the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)**, which entered into force in 2021³². The Escazú agreement provides a binding, legal framework for strengthening climate action through public participation in environmental decision-making, access to justice and access to information and knowledge.
- Governments, private sector and development partners **address procedural justice, distributive justice and restorative justice as part of a rights-based approach to climate justice**. This includes a focus on the meaningful participation and inclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups in decision-making processes; the fair distribution of resources where the most vulnerable communities receive the benefits of adaptation and addressing loss and damage; and ensuring that those responsible for causing climate change are also responsible for supporting actions and repairing harms.
- Governments, private sector and development partners implement **actions for racial equality and justice** as an explicit part of a rights-based approach to climate justice.
- Government, CSOs and the private sector establish **platforms for dialogue and consensus building on a rights-based approach to climate change** in the Caribbean and take action to address current challenges to expanding this approach.
- Government, CSOs and development partners support the **empowerment of vulnerable and**

31 There are only two Caribbean countries that recognise the right to a healthy environment at the constitutional level – Jamaica and Guyana.

32 “Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean”
<https://www.cepall.org/en/escazuagreement>

marginalised communities to claim ESCE rights through public education and awareness raising on human rights, engage vulnerable communities to actively participate in the policy process and ensure prior informed consent of communities.

- Development partners and funders provide **capacity building for data collection and analysis of policy priorities and for advocacy**, including strategic litigation and use of legal tools, by CSOs and other non-state actors to ensure greater accountability of the public and private sector for climate action.
- Activists and CSOs acknowledge and promote a **rights-based approach at the centre of activism**, and work to integrate the climate justice agenda into other rights-based movements.
- Courts at the national and regional levels, including the Caribbean Court of Justice and Inter-American Court of Human Rights, **uphold the rule of law and access to climate justice**.



Rural woman producer in Antigua and Barbuda showcases her products. Credit: HaMa and Refica

Global level

- Parties to the UNFCCC recognise and integrate a rights-based approach to climate change into the Paris Agreement and its ongoing operationalisation to ensure climate justice.
- Developed countries, including the G7, recognise and provide climate reparations to Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries in order to right historical injustices, including their responsibility for excessive levels of greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change and result in disproportionate impacts on SIDS and other developing countries and a growing debt burden. These historical injustices are also linked to the high vulnerability of Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries rooted in colonialism and subordination.
- The International Court of Justice and other relevant bodies uphold the rule of law and access to climate justice for Caribbean and other SIDS.

Our key messages for a right-based approach for climate justice in the Caribbean are:

- Know and defend your rights
- Rights to a healthy and safe environment and climate are a universal right
- Caribbean SIDS will not be climate sacrifice zones
- Climate justice = racial and social justice
- Support and fully operationalise the Escazú Agreement



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Delivering the Agenda

The Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda was developed by and for civil society and other non-state actors and its implementation will be led by the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance in partnership with vulnerable communities and other local rights holders as well as the public and private sector and other actors, including funders, technical agencies and international non-governmental organisations that can provide financial and technical support to enable implementation.

In particular, the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance will seek to strengthen capacity and coordination and mobilise resources for effective implementation of the Agenda. Further details are outlined below.

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY AND COORDINATION

The Agenda provides a framework to guide the work of Caribbean CSOs, activists, creatives, academics and other non-state actors. Given the geographic and language diversity and scale of work to be undertaken, efforts will be organised via thematic groups and geographically focused groups through the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance to encourage knowledge sharing, collaboration and coordination. These groups will build on existing networks as far as possible, such as the Agriculture Alliance of the Caribbean (AACARI), Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers, Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples, Maroon Women Chambers of Cooperation, Caribbean Women in Leadership and Caribbean Youth Coalition for Climate Justice. These groups can also engage in participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning on implementation of the Agenda, and be engaged by partner organisations targeting their inputs and support.

A coordinated programme of work to strengthen the capacity of the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance and the broader network of civil society and non-state actors to implement the Agenda will be key. This capacity building will need to focus on organisational, technical and network capacity building and target activists, organisations and networks at all levels – community, national and regional. Given limited resources, the following strategies are recommended:

- Priority should be given to building the capacity of CSOs, grassroot networks and networks of small and micro enterprises, which can in turn build the capacity of their members, to support climate justice advocacy and action. A comprehensive assessment of their capacity needs must be conducted to guide this work.
- Priority should be given to training of trainers to build the capacity of civil society leaders and mentors spread across the Caribbean countries who can champion climate justice work and train others in various countries and sectors. Leaders and mentors can be selected from stronger CSOs and small and micro enterprises and key partner agencies. This training should build on existing training programmes and tools developed by CANARI and others to build both technical and organisational capacity.
- Alliances, networks and other partnerships must be strengthened among civil society and non-state actors and among civil society and public and private sector partners that support their work to enhance movement building and long-term sustainability. This includes developing and maintaining an online hub to support knowledge sharing, learning and networking on climate justice across the region.
- Existing capacity building efforts should be leveraged and efforts focused on addressing the priorities identified in the Agenda with these providers, including a focus on key organisations in the region delivering capacity building from academia, civil society and governmental and inter-governmental agencies. Support will be needed to assist these providers to expand or refine the focus of their capacity building to ensure that climate justice priorities are being addressed.
- The approach should be grounded in evaluation and learning, and use a participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning framework to regularly assess capacity building targets, results and recommendations for adapting future capacity building.

The Agenda also provides a framework to guide how partners from the public and private sectors, regional and international technical agencies and funders can target their funding and technical assistance to vulnerable communities and the CSOs that support them to deliver the objectives and priority actions. There are several initiatives in the Caribbean region that are currently supporting CSOs, households and community enterprises to engage in climate justice and build local resilience, including through capacity building. An initial mapping of these initiatives was prepared to support development of the Agenda, but further work will be needed to develop a comprehensive database and identify gaps, challenges and opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and knowledge sharing to facilitate scale up and replication of successful initiatives. This work can be coordinated and facilitated through the online Caribbean Resilience Knowledge Platform³³ that allows easy access and sharing of information among allies, their networks and other partners.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

The implementation of the Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda will be supported initially through the Climate Action Small Grant Facility, which has been established by CANARI with the support of the Open Society Foundations. This Facility will provide small grants for implementation of priority actions identified in the Agenda by allies and their partners within the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance up to 2025.

Further funding will need to be mobilised through the public and private sectors, regional and international technical agencies and other funders beyond 2025 to support ambitious action on various aspects of climate justice in the Caribbean. Funder roundtables and other efforts by allies will be undertaken to support the necessary resource mobilisation.

³³ See <http://resiliencecanari.org>



Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

A participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning (PMEL) framework will need to be developed to track progress and measure success in implementing the Caribbean Climate Justice and Resilience Agenda, including the achievement of desired outcomes, lessons learnt and recommendations for updating and refining the Agenda. The PMEL framework should be co-developed with the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance, vulnerable communities and other rights holders and non-state actors within 12 months of finalising the Agenda.

In designing the PMEL framework, the following best practices will be considered, which have been proposed by CSOs and other non-state actors:

- Monitoring and evaluation should be participatory and use innovative and interactive methods and tools to effectively engage rights holders and non-state actors.
- Monitoring and evaluation methods must be simple and easy to use by civil society, vulnerable communities and other rights holders and non-state actors.
- Learning by CSOs, vulnerable communities and enterprises and their partners should be at the centre of the process.
- Monitoring and evaluation targets and indicators for the Agenda should be linked to targets and indicators in regional and global policies and programmes (e.g. Regional Climate Change Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan, Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] and the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC).
- The findings of the monitoring and evaluation should be communicated to all right holders and relevant non-state actors in forms and languages that are easily accessible to them.



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