



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



For Immediate Release

## **CANARI launches project integrating innovative technologies to strengthen coastal communities' resilience in Trinidad and Tobago**

**Port of Spain, July 26, 2023** – Building the resilience of vulnerable coastal communities in Trinidad and Tobago through the use of innovative digital technologies for more inclusive and evidence-based decision-making is the focus of the new *Tech4CoastalResilience* project being implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in partnership with the Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries, Tobago House of Assembly.

Coastal communities are facing growing challenges from sea level rise, coastal erosion and extreme weather events due to the climate crisis. However, assessments to date of these challenges have been hampered by a lack of access to data and technical capacity, leading to gaps in coastal management responses and the planning and implementation of suitable climate actions. Under the project, “Integrating digital technologies and participatory tools to support coastal community resilience in Trinidad and Tobago (*Tech4CoastalResilience*)”, the aim is to improve the technical capacity and resources of coastal communities and key management agencies to use innovative technologies and tools to address data gaps and enable a more inclusive and informed approach for building resilience. This includes use of technologies such as participatory geographic information systems (PGIS) and drones to map and monitor local climate impacts on the coast.

As CANARI Senior Technical Officer and Resilience Lead, Dr. Ainka Granderson, highlighted at the



*Moruga community stakeholders in PGIS mapping exercise*

recent 2023 Caribbean Urban Forum: “Drones and other digital technologies are a largely untapped resource that can support citizen science and help us better capture and integrate local knowledge and practices with technical data for an in-depth understanding of coastal vulnerabilities and priorities to build resilience. We need to identify and test appropriate applications and build local capacity to scale these up.”

In particular, the project will focus on ten vulnerable coastal communities, including

fisherfolk and other coastal resource users and community-based organisations, for piloting and initial implementation of the technologies and tools. These include Blanchisseuse, Carli Bay, Icacos, Matelot, Mayaro and Moruga in Trinidad and Castara, Roxborough, Scarborough and Speyside in Tobago. By ensuring that members of these vulnerable communities are also co-implementers of the project, an expected outcome is that they will not only gain new knowledge and skills, but develop an enhanced sense of community ownership of resilience actions.

The project will also support at least four government agencies, including fisheries and coastal management authorities, to enhance their knowledge and skills to use drones and other digital technologies to capture and integrate local and scientific knowledge and apply participatory tools to engage coastal communities in planning and decision-making.

Set to run from March 2023 to December 2024, the project is being implemented by CANARI in partnership with the Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries, Tobago House of Assembly. It is supported by the “Harnessing Innovative Technologies to Support Resilience Settlements on the Coastal Zones of the Caribbean (HIT RESET Caribbean)” programme. HIT RESET Caribbean is funded by the ACP Innovation Fund, OACPS Research and Innovation Programme, which is implemented by the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and financed by the European Union (EU).

Work is currently underway on the first component of the project, during which key government and community stakeholders will help identify potential digital technologies and participatory tools and select criteria to determine their appropriate application in the target areas.

For more information on HIT RESET Caribbean and this project, see: <https://canari.org/technologies-4-resilience-tt/>

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**About CANARI:** The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit institute which has been working across the Caribbean islands for more than 30 years. Our mission is to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. Our work focuses on Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Equity and Justice, Participatory Governance and Resilience. For more information, see: <http://www.canari.org/>

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