

# Climate Change Governance in Caribbean Jurisdictions

## A. Abstract

Climate change governance in Caribbean jurisdictions is a reflection of the many different Actors who have played significant roles at various times in the evolution of the global warming debate. At the international level the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a grouping of small island states united by common concerns about the potentially devastating impact of this phenomenon on their economies seized the opportunity to influence the dialogue leading up to the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Shared concerns about the pervasive nature of the effects of climate change and interest in boosting technical and financial capacities further served to unite them and ensured the continuation of a regional approach to the formulation of strategies and adaptation plans. Notwithstanding the early successes of the group, implementation of strategies designed to adapt to perceived and predicted impacts will be most effective at national levels and will require transformational changes to the governance architecture, which is characterized by political systems which have their origin in an inherited Westminster parliamentary system, which is not ideally suited to the management of shared resources or the facilitation of greater involvement of the wider community.

The transformational changes envisaged will require a reconfiguration of the sectoral approach to resource management and the use of legislative instruments to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the centre of decision making. It will also require institutional reform which enables the creation of the ideal framework for fostering inter-agency coordinating of all planning and development programmes; an intensive and sustained injection of resources, the application of relevant technology; and, adequate training in generating, analysing, and utilising climate change data in decision-making.

## B. Climate Change threat to Caribbean States

From the onset of warnings and discussions about global warming and climate change, Caribbean<sup>1</sup> countries have acknowledged the threat which this phenomenon poses to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and their vulnerabilities given their small size, number of

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<sup>1</sup> While a physical description of the Caribbean refers to all of the countries bordering the Caribbean Sea, for the purposes of this study the countries referred to here will include only those which are members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). These include, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

communities which traditionally are located in the narrow coastal belt and relatively fragile economies dependent on the exploitation of their natural resources. Despite acknowledgement by the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) in its Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC 2007) that Caribbean States in total, contribute less than 0.1% of the Green House Gases (GHG) which have been identified as the primary culprit in the warming of the Earth's atmosphere, they are likely to be most adversely affected and the least likely to develop adequate protective mechanisms. Those dire warnings of climate variability and sea level rise have manifested themselves in sea level rise, more frequent and extreme weather events, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, coastal erosion, and changing precipitation patterns. The consequences of such phenomena have been flooding, landslides, soil loss, biodiversity loss, damages to crop, personal property, and economic and physical infrastructure and most importantly, economic setbacks which take years for full recovery.

Recognizing very early, their limited capacity to meet the challenges of global warming and climate change, Caribbean States, under the leadership of both the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)<sup>2</sup> and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), embarked on a set of programmes which sought to highlight the cynical paradoxes of their predicament as a means of attracting the necessary financial and technical assistance needed in order to adequately adapt. For Caribbean States, it was not a question of mitigating the generation of GHGs, since their contribution to global warming was so miniscule, but rather a question of building climate resilient low carbon economies and adapting to climate change. Such changes to policies and programmes across the entire spectrum of their socio-economic landscape will require transformational changes in institutional arrangements and an unprecedented injection of technical and financial assistance from the developed world to assist in creating a system that would help poor and vulnerable countries adequately manage climate-related impacts. While the financial challenges have wisely received considerable attention and pledges, similar attention to the institutional architecture has not been sufficiently addressed.

Much of the response to date has been orchestrated through the regional governmental mechanisms of CARICOM, through which much of the strategic plans have been formulated and funding sourced. However, the actual implementation of programmes, though in most instances coordinated by the regional body, CARICOM, is the responsibility of individual States. For many of these States, inadequate technical capacities and financial constraints have meant the establishment of various configurations of Climate Change Units within existing governmental ministries. This governance architecture is, in most of the islands<sup>3</sup>, an inheritance of the

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<sup>2</sup> AOSIS has a membership of 44 States and observers, drawn from all oceans and regions of the world: Africa, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, Pacific and South China Sea. Thirty-seven are members of the United Nations, close to 28 percent of developing countries, and 20 percent of the UN's total membership

<sup>3</sup> Except Haiti and Suriname, all of the CARICOM States would have been subjected to British Colonial governance from which the Westminster system of government would have emerged.

Westminster system of government<sup>4</sup>, and reflective of the challenges which afflicted environmental management concerns within these administrations. Though based on principles of democracy and transparency, the building blocs' of good governance, this system has not ensured effectiveness either in creating the appropriate institutional architecture adequately suited to the management of shared resources or enabled greater involvement of the wider community and an appreciation for the severity of the problem.

The magnitude of the challenges ahead in adapting to climate change and creating resilient economies will encompass a more adaptive and cross-sectoral approach to resource management and the use of legislative instruments to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the centre of decision making. It will also require institutional reform which enables the creation of the ideal framework for fostering inter-agency coordinating of all planning and development programmes; an intensive and sustained injection of resources, the application of relevant technology; and, adequate training in generating, analysing, and utilising climate change data in decision-making.

### **C. Climate Change Governance in SIDS - International**

Much of the literature on climate change governance in SIDS (Ashe et al 1999; Heileman 1993; Depledge 2005; Bertzold 2010, 2011) points to the outstanding early achievements of AOSIS, the trans-regional, inter-governmental, informal organization comprised of 44 small island countries that share similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change. Established in 1990, AOSIS functions primarily as an ad hoc lobby and negotiating voice for SIDS within the United Nations system and was particularly effective in shaping and influencing discussions leading to the adoption of the UNFCCC.

According to Bertzold (2010), the organization can point to some remarkable accomplishments in the climate change negotiations, including ensuring that the text of the 1992 Convention explicitly acknowledges the special situation of small island developing states as vulnerable countries and, obtaining a seat on the Bureau, a position that until then had been the privilege of the five United Nations regional groups (Bertzold et al 2011). Since then, SIDS have been able to command a seat in other Convention and protocol bodies such as the Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) the boards of the Adaptation Fund and the Transitional Committee that oversees the fund's design (Bertzold et al 2011).

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<sup>4</sup> The Westminster system is a democratic parliamentary system of government modelled after the politics of the United Kingdom. One of its primary features is its governance structure of a Cabinet of Ministers, led by a Prime Minister and composed of other Ministers with responsibilities for various departments sectors such as Finance, National Security, Agriculture, etc. A basic tenet of such a system, at least in theory, is that ministers are responsible for the actions of their departments.

The emergence of AOSIS can be traced to the meeting of the Second World Climate Conference in Geneva in 1990 when they met first as a group and this led to the formation of the group as an ad hoc coalition on climate change within the United Nations. The scientific evidence pointing to the vulnerabilities of SIDS, provided them with a justifiable voice at the discussion table and ultimately ensured that the Convention text, signed in 1992, acknowledged those vulnerabilities. Their emergence as an effective lobbying group was enhanced with the convening to the United Nations Small Island Developing States Conference in Barbados in 1994 which again highlighted the vulnerabilities of SIDS to natural and environmental disasters, noted that they contribute least to global climate change and sea level rise, but were among those that would suffer most from the adverse effects of such phenomena. In this regard, the Conference called for technical and financial assistance under the UNFCCC. The Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) which resulted from the Conference identified climate change and sea level rise as two of the main threats to SIDS and in that regard, identified the importance of adaptation measures to SIDS and the international community (UNGA 1994).

AOSIS, though only an informal group working with no offices and working primarily through their New York diplomatic Missions to the United Nations, was able to enhance their reputation at these early meetings by taking an active part in the discussions. Given their acknowledged vulnerability, a great deal of their focus was on securing financial and technical assistance to combat the imminent threats (Bodansky et al 2012). However, once they recognized the power of their numbers they were able to influence much of the discussion, including partnering with the European Union in pushing for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions. AOSIS functions on the basis of consultation and consensus. Major policy decisions are taken at ambassadorial-level plenary sessions. The Alliance does not have a formal charter. There is no regular budget, nor a secretariat.

Despite these limitations, it has been noted by several authors that these dispersed States were able to exert a profound influence on the negotiations by submitting position papers and attending various group meetings (Ashe et al 1999,). Much of their success, it was also noted (Bertzold et al 2011), was due to the common position held on several issues and their pooling of resources which allowed them to overcome the challenge of limited human and financial resources.

Though AOSIS continues to operate and seek to influence discussions, even as recently at COP 18 where they sought pledges from the developed countries to provide for “loss and damage” incurred by developing countries, many have argued that their influence has waned. Bertzold et al (2011) quoting Shibuya (1996) who noted in his 1996 journal article that the Alliance’s “greatest influence may have now passed, as the discussions moved from the agenda-building phase towards the policy formulation and implementation steps.” In pointing to that shift Bertzold et al (2011) notes that their cohesiveness, the key strength of the Alliance, has come under stress due to the growing fragmentation of the UNFCCC regime.

Examining the activities and positions of AOSIS over three distinct phases 1995 – 2000, the early phase; 2001 to 2005, the implementation phase; and the more recent phase 2006 to 2011; it is apparent that “submissions as a coalition have declined and differences in single issue areas have become more pronounced.” In support of this assertion the authors point out that issue of concern to countries like Guyana, Papua New Guinea, or Suriname is compensation payments as part of Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) programmes, while for other countries in tropical storm zones the area of concern is insurance policies to cover losses and disaster risk reduction (Bertzold et al 2011).

This waning influence within the context of the on-going climate change deliberations was also echoed by Bishop and Payne (2012) who noted that AOSIS was marginalised within the politics of Copenhagen which revolved around the positions adopted by China, India, Brazil and South Africa and was ultimately left stranded in no-man’s land when the talks failed with both China and the United States, the largest emitters of CO<sub>2</sub>, refusing to sign the Copenhagen Accord. The pattern emerging, no doubt was that AOSIS was becoming a fringe player as the heavyweights in the developing countries bloc slugged it out with the developed world on issues of mitigation when adaptation was of more immediate relevance to small, developing countries. According to Bishop and Payne (2012), AOSIS failed to recognize the shifting dynamics of climate change politics, and, in particular, the need to develop a common approach to the ‘big four.’

Despite the carefully researched work by study Bertzold et al (2011) indicating that AOSIS’ influence at climate change negotiations has waned, and the assertion that they might have been slow to react to the changing dynamics of climate change politics (Bishop and Payne 2012), it will be a mistake to so easily dismiss the influential role AOSIS continues to play in climate change governance. In fact, some will assert that AOSIS has successfully used the climate change platform to widen and enhanced its influence in international environmental governance by speaking out and using its numbers to influence decision-making on related matters of sustainable development on behalf of SIDS. In recent years AOSIS has become a spokesperson for SIDS on issues relating to biodiversity conservation, renewable energy and management of ocean resources leading up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), and was a leading voice in articulating the concerns of SIDS and for coordinating support for sustainable development in SIDS. One indication of that diversification is its role in the establishment of SIDS-DOCK, an initiative among AOSIS member countries to provide SIDS with a collective institutional mechanism to assist them transform their national energy sectors into a catalyst for sustainable economic development and help generate financial resources to address adaptation to climate change (SIDS-DOCK 2012)

While individual members may have singular issues which they may choose to pursue outside of the Association and the gulf between AOSIS and the “big four” has widened to the point where AOSIS has had to distance themselves from some positions of the G-77, they have remained nimble but resolute, forming alliances with the EU and other developing countries to make

significant contributions to the ongoing discussions on climate change. In 2007 AOSIS, together with the EU produced the "Bali Action Plan" which defined in concrete terms what a future climate agreement should look like and for the first time, received the signature of all members of the conference.

A similar arrangement at the climate change conference in Durban, South Africa in 2011 with AOSIS, the EU and other developing countries, termed the "Alliance of Ambition," was instrumental in paving the way for the extension of the Kyoto protocol in Doha (Allmeling 2012). While some will point to the failure of the Alliance of Ambition to reach a similar agreement to convince the EU to raise the GHG reduction from 20 to 30 percent, others could point to the relentless efforts of AOSIS and developing countries to ring out from the developing countries an agreement to cover loss and damages which they will, no doubt, incur as developed countries fail to curb their agreed to levels of emissions.

Given the leading role which AOSIS plays in helping to advance the interests of developing countries, it can be argued that though its roots remain grounded in championing the interest of Member States at climate change fora, its larger role in promoting the principles of sustainable development has served to further entrench it as very influential Actors in climate change leadership and environmental governance, on behalf of SIDS, and in particular, Caribbean SIDS.

While some have pointed to the fragmented nature of AOSIS and questions may still be asked about its continued effectiveness as SIDS lead agent in climate change governance regime which was so carefully constructed and has been tremendously successful, particularly in ensuring that its concerns were incorporated in the legally binding Convention, it is not inappropriate to enquire about the implications of such fragmentation on Caribbean SIDS, who like their other Pacific SIDS, benefitted heavily from the unified approach adopted by this alliance. As we have seen from the larger role and extended influence of AOSIS, there is little doubt of its continued relevance. A question which may be more appropriate is to what extent has that diminished influence created a vacuum in climate change governance at the sub-regional and national levels where implementation of that international agenda is translated?

#### **D. Regional Governance Architecture**

Climate change governance in Caribbean jurisdictions, while greatly influenced by positions, issues and agenda shaped at the international level, has to a large extent been a mandate of the Caribbean's regional sub-group of CARICOM and the individual Member States when the focus of the international negotiations moved from issue identification to implementation. CARICOM's legitimacy is established on the basis of several decisions and initiatives articulated by Heads of States of the regional body. At the First CARICOM Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Port of Spain Trinidad 31 May – 2 June 1989, fourteen priority issues and

problems were identified and highlighted and one of the strategic approaches to their solution was highlighted as the, “development of legislative frameworks adequate to the requirements of sound environmental management, and the required machinery for their enforcement. These fourteen priority issues identified in The Port of Spain Accord, issued at the end of the three day meeting, received virtual ratification in Barbados at the 1994 Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island States (SIDS Conference) which identified climate change as one of the priority areas to be addressed in order to ensure the sustainable development of SIDS (Simmons et al 2012).

Following this ground-breaking SIDS Conference, Caribbean governments, through the CARICOM Secretariat, obtained financial assistance from various funding agencies to initiate a number of projects aimed at building capacity in the region for the adaptation to climate change impacts. The first of these projects, implemented between 1997 and 2001, was the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change (CPACC). The goal of the CPACC project was to build capacity in the Caribbean region for the adaptation to climate change impacts, particularly sea level rise. This was accomplished through the completion of vulnerability assessments, adaptation planning, and capacity building activities in several countries and at various regional entities. (ECLAC 2010). That was followed, from 2001 -2004 by the Adaptation to Climate Change in the Caribbean (ACCC) Project, the goal of which was to sustain activities initiated under CPACC and to address issues of adaptation and capacity building not undertaken by CPACC, and also facilitate the transformation of the Regional Project Implementation Unit (RPIU) originally established through CPACC into a legal regional entity for climate change (the Centre).

The formal establishment of RPIU, together with the various initiatives being pursued through the implementation of the projects listed above was an indication of the permanency of climate change adaptation as a factor in the political deliberations of the region and a statement of intent by CARICOM Heads of Government to ensure that the Member States were all committed to joint action in addressing this phenomenon. Also in 2001 that Caribbean Heads of Government took the decision to establish the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) or 5Cs, which eventually became operational in 2005 with the headquarters in Belize.

The establishment of the 5Cs in Belize in 2005 represented an important step towards developing a regional response to climate change. It is the official repository and clearing house for regional climate change data, providing climate change-related policy advice and guidelines to the Caribbean Community Member States through the CARICOM Secretariat. Though primarily policy setting and fund-raising, the Secretariat has recognized that in order to drive the policy framework there is need for a concerted action hence the development of an implementation plan which it is expected, all of the members will pursue.

Building on the goodwill and overwhelming support for the establishment of the 5Cs Caribbean Heads of Government announced the appointment of a Climate Change Task Force “to facilitate and coordinate technical work, advise on policy directions on climate change, and provide support to CARICOM Member States in their preparations for key regional, hemispheric and other global fora and in their negotiations with international development partners” (CARICOM 2008). In announcing its objectives, CARICOM noted that the Task Force had to stay united in advocating the regional priorities within the Group of 77 and the Alliance of Small Island States which have had great influence on determining the international directions on the post-2012 Kyoto Framework of UNFCCC which is aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since it was established the Task Force has been meeting regularly and has been instrumental in helping to inform the work of the AOSIS and Caribbean delegates in adopting a coherent and comprehensive position at the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC deliberations.

In addition to the Task Force, the 5Cs has also been signing cooperative agreements and initiating partnership agreements with several other regional institutions which will assist generating the scientific data to assess the impacts of climate change on ecosystems as well as providing the data for informed decision making. These institutions include the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO) which is responsible for the coordination of the joint scientific activities of the region’s national meteorological services, the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Agency (CDEMA) which is the central agency for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and which houses a hazard database and undertakes vulnerability assessments, and the University of the West Indies (UWI).

CARICOM Heads of Government were also instrumental, together with the World Bank, in establishing the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) in 2007 a cost-effective risk transfer programme for member governments, in response to the devastating impacts of hurricanes and the challenge which governments face in raising necessary finances to restore their economies. CCRIF uses a system called ‘parametric insurance’, where an insurance claim is paid out as soon as a covered event—such as a hurricane of particular strength—impacts a covered geographic area. Instead of hiring expensive claims adjusters and filing massive piles of paperwork, CCRIF pays governments a pre-determined sum right away—thus mobilizing capital for relief and reconstruction when it is needed most (CCRIF 2012).

CCRIF has been hailed as a novel idea and has received critical acclaim among the Climate change fraternity for showing how risk transfer instruments can be a key part of a country’s risk management framework. It is considered as the only working model of a multi-national and parametric-based catastrophe risk pool and is considered a viable template for expansion and/or replication globally, as envisaged under AOSIS’ submission to COP14 in 2008 and as represented in the Copenhagen negotiating text on adaptation (section D of non-paper 31 and paragraphs 9 and 10 of non-paper 41). The Facility has offered its knowledge and expertise to



the UNFCCC process since COP15 in Copenhagen, promoting its insurance approach as “an essential component of a climate change adaptation strategy.” (Kotin 2012)

Having put in place the formal mechanism for coordinating the region’s response to the climate change challenge, and having been relatively successful in harnessing financial support for projects to build and strengthen capacity both at the regional and national levels for mainstreaming climate adaptation in decision making, Caribbean Heads of Government sought to entrench the sustainability and by extension, the leadership role of 5Cs through the establishment of a sustainable funding mechanism to finance administrative costs and provide seed money for projects. In that regard the heads of Government established a Trust Fund of (USD1 million) borrowed from the Petroleum Fund of Trinidad and Tobago. While this may be a small amount, it represents a start towards sustainable financing, though it is anticipated that much of the project funding will remain donor driven.

With basic funding secured for the establishment of the 5Cs, the CARICOM Heads of State participating in the First Congress for the Environmental Charter and Climatic Change, held at Ávila Mountain, Caracas, 11-13 October 2007, asked the 5Cs to prepare a strategy that addresses climate change in the region. In July 2009 the Heads of Government approved the *‘Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change’* (the Regional Framework). The Regional Framework defines CARICOM’s strategic approach for coping with climate change and is guided by five strategic elements and some twenty goals designed to significantly increase the resilience of the CARICOM Member States’ social, economic and environmental systems. The strategic elements are as follows:

1. Mainstreaming climate change adaptation strategies into the sustainable development agenda of CARICOM states.
2. Promoting the implementation of specific adaptation measures to address key vulnerabilities in the region.
3. Promoting actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through fossil fuel reduction and conservation, and switching to renewable and cleaner energy sources.
4. Encouraging action to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems in CARICOM countries to the impacts of a changing climate.
5. Promoting action to derive social, economic, and environmental benefits through the prudent management of standing forests in CARICOM countries.

This regional framework provides a roadmap for action over the period 2009-2015, and builds on the groundwork laid by the 5Cs. The objective of this document is to establish direction for the continued building of resilience to the impacts of GCC by CARICOM states. It also builds upon the extensive work undertaken by governments, regional organisations, NGOs and academic institutions in recent years assessing the impacts of a changing climate (CARICOM 2011).

In a subsequent report *Delivering Transformational Change 2011-21: Implementing the CARICOM 'Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change'* the authors note that achieving the objectives of a climate resilient low carbon economies in the Caribbean “will require a transformational change by national governments, regional organisations, NGOs, the private sector and civil society” together with adequate technical and financial support from the developed world (CARICOM 2011). In that regard, the authors acknowledge that the transformational change envisaged is one which involves a “change in mindset, institutional arrangements, operating systems, collaborative approaches and integrated planning mechanisms.” A strong case is therefore made for an implementation plan based on the “Three-ones” approach to resource mobilization and execution. At the heart of this approach are three core principles:

- One co-ordinating mechanism to manage the process.
- One plan that provides the framework for co-ordinated action by all partners.
- One monitoring and evaluation framework to measure progress, transparency and value for money.

These initiatives, together with the establishment of the 5Cs, and the Task Force received the full endorsement of Caribbean Heads of Government as reflected in the Liliendaal Declaration issued in 2009 at the 30th Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community. The Heads also took the opportunity to stress the importance of adopting a common regional approach to address the threats and challenges of climate change and stated their commitment to providing more effective mechanisms for responding to natural disasters through the development of better risk assessment and material coordination along with the streamlining of risk reduction initiatives. They also affirmed the need for the Caribbean Community and its supporting institutions to play their full part in implementing the shared vision, goals and actions, working in strategic partnerships with others. They also agreed to strengthen their educational institutions to provide training, education, research and development programmes in climate change and disaster risk management particularly in renewable and other forms of alternative energy, forestry, agriculture, tourism, health, coastal zone management and water resources management to increase the Region’s capacity to build resilience and adapt to climate change (CARICOM 2009).

At the 2012 CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting held in Suriname the Heads of Government approved the ‘Implementation Plan for the Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change’ (Regional Framework) which defines the Region’s strategic approach for coping with climate change for the period 2011 – 2021.<sup>5</sup> The strategy outline for implementing the Regional Framework is based on the “Three-ones” approach to resource mobilisation and execution and calls for one coordinating mechanism, one plan and one

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<sup>5</sup> Communiqué Issued at the Conclusion of the Twenty-Third Inter-Sessional Meeting Of The Conference of Heads of Government of The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), 8-9 March 2012, Paramaribo, Suriname.

monitoring and evaluation framework. That approach requires that all CARICOM Member States subscribe to “One coordinating mechanism to manage the process, one plan that provides the framework for coordinated action by all partners and one monitoring and evaluation framework to measure progress, transparency and value for money.” (CARICOM 2011)

The coordination and execution of this implementation plan will be the responsibility of a new body, the Liliendal Bureau, Chaired by the Chairman of the Council on Trade and Economic Development (COTED), who reports directly to the CARICOM Heads of Government with the 5Cs providing technical and secretarial support. Still very much a young and fledgling institution, the 5Cs Center, identified as the primary institution for coordinating the region’s response, has been unfortunately and unfairly branded by many, as “just a clearing house for information” pertaining to climate change. Armed with the endorsement of the CARICOM Heads of Government for the implementation of Regional Framework for Achieving and with the recognition by several institutions as the lead agency for coordinating the region’s response to the climate change challenge, that perception should change.

Changing that perception and bringing about that transformational change which it espouses will require among other things, the establishment and operationalization of formal governance structures such as the Liliendal Bureau, which, to date, has not met. It will also require formal endorsement and adherence to the principles of the implementation articulated in the Regional Framework by the respective countries. Also, the “one monitoring and evaluation framework which is intended to measure progress, transparency and value for money” is still some time away from being implemented given the fact that a consultancy to design the plan has only just been advertised with plans to commence in January.

However, this new Regional Framework initiative, together with the implementation plan adopted and endorsed by Caribbean Heads at the 2011 Summit, present some options which should serve as a catalyst for the development of climate adaptation plans, and if embraced by all actors, can provide a meaningful platform on which to achieve economic resilience.

## **E. Sub-Regional Climate Change Governance Initiatives**

Much of the initiatives undertaken in respect of climate change mitigation and adaptation have been pursued and implemented either through the 5Cs or directly through the respective countries. However, in recent times the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)<sup>6</sup>, made up of countries that are also Members of CARICOM, with an enviable track record in providing advice and technical assistance on environmental management and sustainable development, recently announced their intention to add the issue of climate change to their

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<sup>6</sup> Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

portfolio by way of the announcement of a US\$ 14.5 million USAID-funded regional project, “*Reducing risk to human and natural assets resulting from climate change (RRACC)*.” This project, it is reported, will seek to enhance the overall, long-term capacity of the OECS region to respond to climate change, while strengthening the near-term resilience of Member States to climate change impacts through concrete, on-the-ground actions (OECS, 2011).

The OECS Climate Change Project, which is being implemented in six<sup>7</sup> of the Member Countries, was launched in July, 2011, is intended, as the name implies, to reduce the risk to human and natural assets resulting from climate change and. This will include: (1) reinforcing the policy, legislative and institutional framework that the region needs as a foundation for effective adaptation (2) direct, targeted actions that improve the management of freshwater and coastal resources (3) supporting the development of critical climate change information needs, and (4) developing and implementing a comprehensive education programme on Climate Change and Variability (OECS 2011).

OECS’ emergence as another Actor in the governance of climate change in the Caribbean is not a surprise, though carries the potential of complicating an already crowded field of administrators. The OECS’ mandate for climate change governance is derived from several instruments conferring on the organisation the right to coordinate, on behalf of Member States environmental management and sustainable development programmes. One such instrument is the St. George’s Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS (SGD). The SGD is structured around 21 Principles, and orders them under one overall aim and four major goals, each with a set of outcomes. Principle 8 of the St. George’s Declaration requires each Member State to:

- a) Establish appropriate and relevant integrated strategies, plans and policies to adapt and respond adequately and in a timely fashion to the causes and impacts of climate change;
- b) Collaborate at the regional and international levels, in the implementation of obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Included within the structure of the SGD is a framework for monitoring progress towards these goals through the use of common regional indicators, and the identification of a number of supportive actions that Member States agree to implement, in partnership with and in support of all stakeholders.

In February 2011, Member States of the OECS went a step further in solidifying their coordinating and harmonising agenda by giving effect to The Revised Treaty of Basseterre

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<sup>7</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

(RToB) Establishing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Economic Union (OECS/EU). In Article 24 of the Protocol of Eastern Caribbean Union the issue of environmental sustainability addressed as each Protocol Member State is:

...required to *implement the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS* to minimize environmental vulnerability, improve environmental management and protect the region's natural (including historical and cultural) resource base for optimal social and economic benefits for Member States.

By virtue of Article 24 of the Protocol the SGD and its principles for environmental sustainability are elevated to a legal obligation on the part of Member States to minimise environmental vulnerability, improve environmental management and protect the region's natural (including historical and cultural) resource base for optimal social and economic benefits for Member States.

## **F. National Governance Architecture**

The range of cooperative measures and initiatives being undertaken by the various international and regional agencies to heighten awareness and put in place mechanisms for climate change governance does not detract from the need for national entities to put in place similar mechanisms. In fact, it may be argued that the State is the only entity capable of making national policy in respect of climate change mitigation, resilience and adaptation and developing the governance infrastructure for their implementation and enforcement. For Caribbean States, there is little doubt that they are unaware of the grave consequences of the climate change challenge since they have been at the forefront in the raising of awareness at the international level through AOSIS and the creation of necessary governance platforms for development of regional and national programs of action. The question for consideration is what governance architectures are being created or have been established to translate the international and regional successes at the national or nation state level?

In both the Regional Framework and Implementation Plan documents prepared for the 5Cs and which received the endorsement and approval of Caribbean Heads of Government, the focus of the programmes to be pursued is on mainstreaming climate change adaptation strategies into the sustainable development agendas, promoting the implementation of specific adaptation measures to address key vulnerabilities and promoting action to reduce GHG by reducing the use of fossil fuel. Likewise, the focus of the OECS' RRACC programme is also on climate change adaptation as opposed to mitigation. Given this stated focus, the foundation on which any such programs can be built should include enhancement of the scientific understanding of regional and local climate change, and ecosystem and societal impacts; systematic monitoring of climate, ecosystem and societal impacts; incorporation of climate issues in long term planning for infrastructure and for key socio-economic sectors; developing public awareness programs around

anticipated climate impacts to encourage individual and collective adaptation (changes in farming practices, development of new crop varieties, etc); and, initiating societal debate about the impacts of climate change and appropriate societal adjustments (Meadowcroft 2009).

In terms of the governance architecture required for climate change impacts to be addressed in national, regional and local planning processes (for example land use planning) Meadowcroft (2009) also suggested the need for periodic national and regional reports on adaptation and anticipated long range adaptation costs; the establishment of regional and sector based adaptation fora with key stakeholders to explore impacts and responses; collaboration with the insurance industry to identify vulnerabilities and take remedial action; the integration of climate adaptation into planning for protected areas and in agriculture and natural resource management plans; and the incorporation of adaptation issues into work of research funding councils.

As signatories to the UNFCCC, 16 Caribbean states have produced the required Initial National Communications and several have completed their Second National Communications or are in the process of doing so (ECLAC 2010). However, only Guyana (2002) and Saint Lucia (2002) have completed a Climate Change Adaptation Policy and Action Plan. In Dominica, Cabinet has granted approval for the drafting of an Environmental, Climate Change and Development Bill and consultations with relevant stakeholders have commenced. As part of the preparation of their National Reports all of the countries have established national committees (CDB 2008) to oversee and supervise the development of policies, legislation, strategies and programmes. Though these committees are comprised of all major stakeholders, including private sector representatives and NGOs, most of them fall under Ministries assigned responsibility for environmental management.

Ideally, climate change programmes, together with the governance architecture designed for their implementation should be instituted in a manner which enables them to be integrally linked with ministries responsibly for planning or directly associated with the office of the Head of Government (Prime Minister). The reason for this is that recommendations and directives emanating from these committees, would be understood to have the approval of the highest governmental authority and provide greater assurance that these will be acted upon with a greater sense of urgency.

The slow pace at which national entities have proceeded in moving beyond the reporting phase is indicative of the implementation deficit which has characterised much of the environmental and sustainable development initiatives pursued by governments in the region. While one can point to several contributing factors it must be recognized that the traditional adherence to a Westminster system of governance, which gives ministers responsibility for the actions of their department, does not lend itself to the collaborative, inter-ministerial governance system demanded by cross-cutting phenomena such as climate change. Neither is it ideally suited to the management of shared resources nor does it enable greater involvement of the wider community

and an appreciation for the severity of the problem (Simmons, 2008). More importantly, the tendency has been for climate change programmes to be attached to ministries with responsibility for the environment and traditionally these are not ministries with the greatest degree of political influence. While in circumstances of limited technical and financial resources, it may be expedient to place programmes within an existing institution, it may be interpreted as conveying perceptions that climate change adaptation is an environmental matter as opposed to being of integral importance to the country's economic development.

## **G. Conclusion**

Notwithstanding the challenges of complex governance architecture and multiple agents, the articulation of a Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate change does provide an adequate agenda around which the climate change governance can be constructed and pursued. This agenda is structured on the clearly defined "Three-Ones" principle which seek to ensure both regional and national programmes are coordinated and that other initiatives which may be initiated by sub-groupings such as the OECS are not excluded. More importantly, the endorsement by the Caribbean Heads of Government, which includes leaders from the OECS sub-region, provides the framework with the legitimacy essential for its acceptance at the national level. The establishment of the Caribbean Task Force on Climate Change by CARICOM, together with the partnerships established between the 5Cs and other regional organisation such as CMO, CDEMA, and UWI is evidence of some level of engagement of the scientific community in the analysis of climate change impacts on ecosystems.

Monitoring and enforcement, the other essential ingredient in climate change governance has been identified as one of the pillars of three-ones approach and though it has not been instituted, plans have been initiated to ensure that it is made operational in the near future. While there are no guarantees that these measures will address the chronic implementation deficit plaguing the region there is little doubt that the governance architecture for climate change in the region is engaging the attention of decision makers as it slowly evolves. The unwavering focus of AOSIS together with the efforts of the CARICOM and Caribbean heads of government have provide a platform on which the fluid state of climate change governance can proceed. Though it is still too early to determine how effective the Regional Framework will be in effecting the transformational change required, it does contain some of the essential elements required for that transition. Now, armed with a clearly defined agenda and emerging governance architecture involving multiple international, regional and national actors it is hoped that the Caribbean countries will derive the benefits associated with these actions.

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