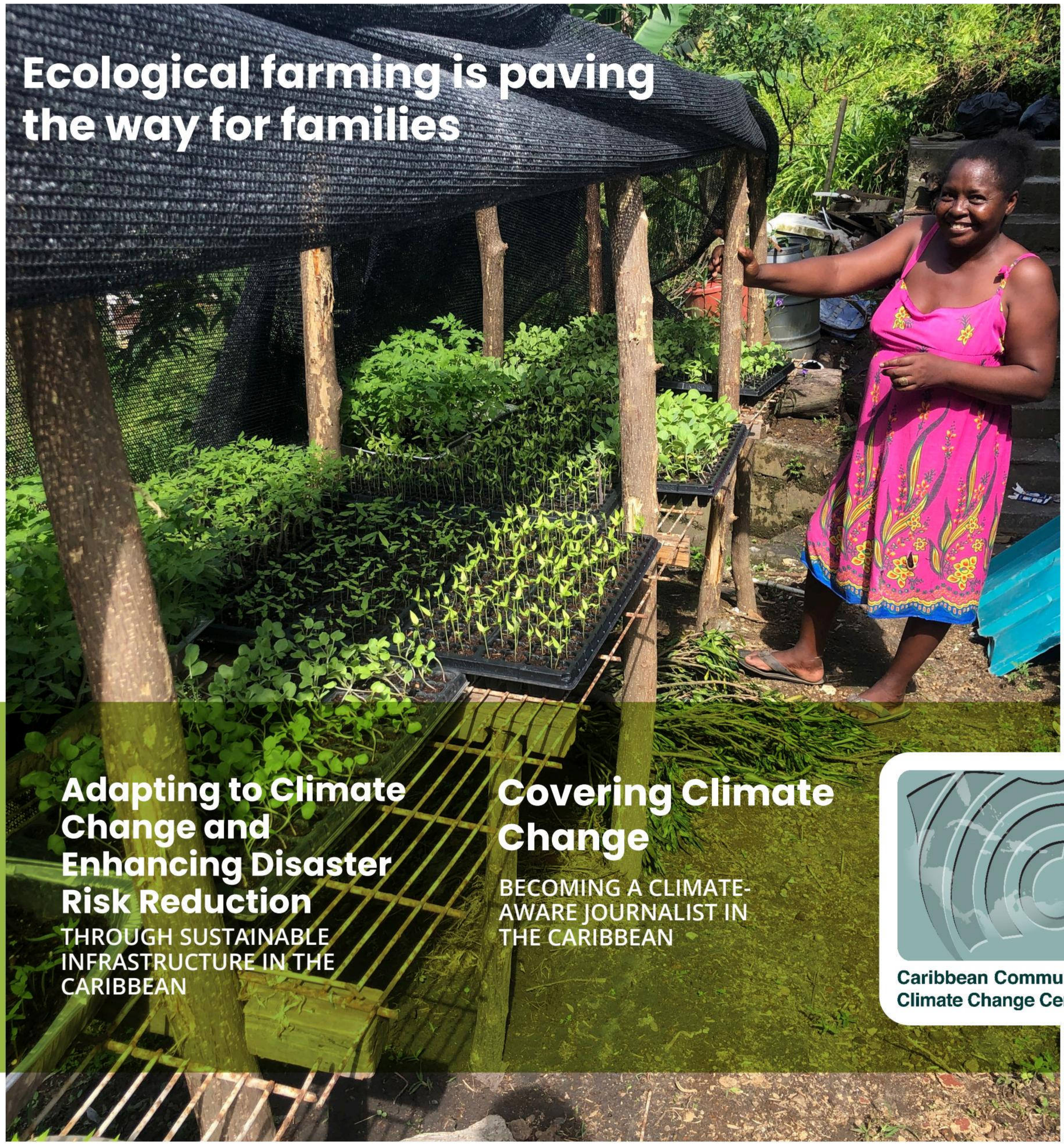
NEWSLETTER

VOLUME No. 2 / ISSUE No.3

SPOTLIGHT ON CARIBBEAN CLIMATE

Capturing climate change related news and issues from a Caribbean perspective.



Ecological farming is paving the way for families

Adapting to Climate Change and Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction

THROUGH SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Covering Climate Change

BECOMING A CLIMATE-AWARE JOURNALIST IN THE CARIBBEAN

Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre

Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre

Building resilience. Securing our future.

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Inviting Youth Advocacy for Climate Change and Health in the Caribbean

About the I deserve a #BetterClimate4MyHealth campaign

Join the #Betterclimate4MyHealth campaign and make your voice heard! This rallying cry aims to inspire young people aged 9-30 from 16 CARIFORUM nations to stand up and speak out about the health impacts of climate change. By sharing real-life stories, the "I deserve a #BetterClimate4MyHealth" campaign emphasizes the importance of Caribbean youth in building resilience and promoting social inclusion.

Exciting events are planned by CCCCC from January to June 2023 to support this campaign. You can take selfies for climate and health, participate in a youth forum, walk for climate and health, engage in clean-up initiatives, write letters to leaders, and compete in art, photography, poetry, and climate and health stories.

We partnered with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), the #Betterclimate4MyHealth campaign as part of the EU-funded 2020-2025 EU/CARIFORUM Climate Change and Health Project. The initiative aims to strengthen national and sub-regional health systems, making them more resilient to the impacts of climate change on people and healthcare delivery.

Take action for climate and health today and help empower the Caribbean! Join the #Betterclimate4MyHealth campaign now.

From the Executive Director

Dr. Colin Young
Executive Director, Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre

Since the last newsletter, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world's most authoritative scientific body on climate change, released, on March 20, 2023, the "AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023." While the AR6 report reiterated the findings from the previously issued reports, there are four key takeaways, that in my view, are especially important for CARICOM because of the implications for our sustainable development agenda. These key takeaways include:

1. Climate impacts on people and ecosystems are more widespread and severe than expected and future climate impacts will continue to increase with every fraction of degree of warming:

Climate change is already impacting every region of the world as is evidenced by crushing droughts, extreme heat, frequent wildfires, record floods, and powerful hurricanes that are collectively threatening the livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in SIDS and developing countries. Importantly, the AR Synthesis report concluded that we are "locked into even worse impacts from climate change in the near-term (up to 2040). As such, our countries must do all they can to accelerate the implementation of their climate adaptation agenda. Already, finance for adaptation remains a significant barrier that prevents countries from adapting to the effects of climate change. As you delve into the Newsletter, you will see River Providence's article which highlights why sustainable infrastructure is a good pathway to climate adaptation.

Dr. Colin Young
Executive Director,
Caribbean Community
Climate Change Centre

2. A Rapidly Closing Window of Opportunity for Climate Action Exists:

The AR6 Synthesis report presents a sliver of hope that outlines practical and economically feasible solutions that can be pursued to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 if we are to avoid overshooting 1.5°C (2.7o F). Importantly, emissions must peak by 2025, if we are to avoid an overshoot of

1.5°C. Solutions include inter alia decarbonizing electricity, pursuing nature-based solutions and carbon removal technologies, and electrifying transportation. When you read Deaney Gellizeau's letter, you will understand why he appeals to political leaders that if we DO NOTHING there will be NO FUTURE. It is a clarion call that we must act now to secure a sustainable future for our young people.

3. Some impacts of climate change are already too severe to adapt to, which are increasing losses and damages:

Already, we are witnessing the disappearance of coastlines, washing away of cemeteries, displacement of people, and increase in climate refugees because of the ravages of climate disasters such as floods, droughts, and hurricanes. The economic and non-economic losses are mounting, particularly in SIDS and developing countries. A joint article written by Tecla Fontenard and Donna King-Brathwaite in our newsletter stresses the important role of media personnel in building climate change awareness. There, they explain that the media must humanize the climate-related impacts, improve climate literacy, enhance accountability nationally, and advocate for greater action internationally.

4. Adaptation is crucial. Feasible solutions already exist, but climate FINANCE for adaptation must dramatically increase THIS DECADE to scale up solutions and to reach vulnerable communities:

While SIDS cannot adapt their way out of climate change, the AR 6 Synthesis report outlines successful adaptation initiatives that can be scaled up and implemented to mitigate losses and damages caused by climate change. Look out for Kenton X Chance's success story on ecological and climate-conscious farming - an example of adaptation initiatives that can be replicated. For us in the Caribbean, adaptation is critical and essential. However, our countries lack the fiscal space to implement adaptation actions at the scale and urgency required. We need the correct climate finance architecture to effectively channel finance to assist our countries.

Even as SIDS struggle to access finance from global climate funds, bilateral support, from countries such as Canada, the EU, and USAID, for example, provides critical climate finance to help build climate resilience in the region. Yet the quantum of resources is not adequate to implement the activities contained within the Region's Nationally Determined Contributions.

Ultimately, climate resilience cannot be built from the top down; it must be an inclusive, bottom-up process. A good example can be seen in the article by Ashley Lashley "Making Youths a Part of the Climate Solution". It serves as an inspiration for positive outcomes that can be achieved when youths are part of the solution. They must have a seat at the table and help chart the future they will inherit.

We appreciate your engagement with us, and we hope to hear from you about the amazing climate-related work being done within and across the Region.

ECOLOGICAL FARMING IS PAVING THE WAY FOR FAMILIES IN ST VINCENT TO SAVE MONEY, LIVE HEALTHIER, AND BECOME CLIMATE CONSCIOUS

By Kenton X Chance
Freelance Writer, for the Richmond Vale Academy (RVA)

Jasmine Pierre readily admits that she was not immediately sold on the idea of farming without chemicals. She speaks about cynicism towards the team from Richmond Vale Academy (RVA) that had come to her backyard to help set up an ecological home garden. "Accepting that you can do something in a better way, means that you have to change, and change is not easy," she says.

However, Pierre, a resident of the northwest coastal town of Chateau Belair, is now a convert to ecological farming, and emphasises the health benefits, savings, and income that a household can generate from a small plot of land.

"We planted this christophine, and I can tell you, it has saved our family so much money. I can't believe how much this one plant can produce," she recalls, adding that when she did chemical-based farming in the mountains she never considered planting a christophine vine.

"I was too busy wasting my time and money with chemical farming," she says, adding that with the model that RVA taught her, every week she harvests from her backyard most of the vegetables that her family consumes. "I never thought that this small piece of land could produce as much as 100 pounds of tomatoes, cucumbers, and cabbage. And you should have seen my cauliflowers!"

Pierre is among over 200 households in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)that the RVA has introduced or reintroduced to ecological farming.

The RVA team has designed, implemented, and rehabilitated over 200 backyard gardens over the past five years and is on its way to achieving its first target milestone of 300 backyard gardens.

This is despite the April 2021 explosive eruption of La Soufriere volcano, which dumped large quantities of volcanic material across the country, including in areas where the gardens are located.

RVA's campus is located at the foothills of the volcano and was severely impacted by the eruption. Its buildings, which were covered, inside and out, with tonnes of volcanic ash, have been rehabilitated.

However, RVA needs another year to rehabilitate its farm, which included free-range egg layers, ecological banana production in an agroforestry system, silvopastoral livestock system, rainwater harvesting models, compost systems and a forest garden.

All the academy's capacity-building programmes, such as training people from the Caribbean and around the world, have resumed along with coral restoration, coastal protection and the home garden projects.

"We are happy that as the climate crisis has shifted attention back to a more harmonious relationship with nature, we can play a role in introducing or reintroducing people to ecological farming," Herberg says.

The home gardens, which are individually designed depending on the size and gradient of the land, often benefit from micro-climate created by the supporting vegetation. They often include a seed nursery table, chicken coup and use rainwater for irrigation. Many of the homes have been supplied with water tanks used to harvest rainwater for irrigation.

The Pass-it-On Sustainable Model Gardens teaches farmers to reduce soil erosion, with raised beds constructed along contours on the hillside and supported by gliricidia tree logs or bamboo.

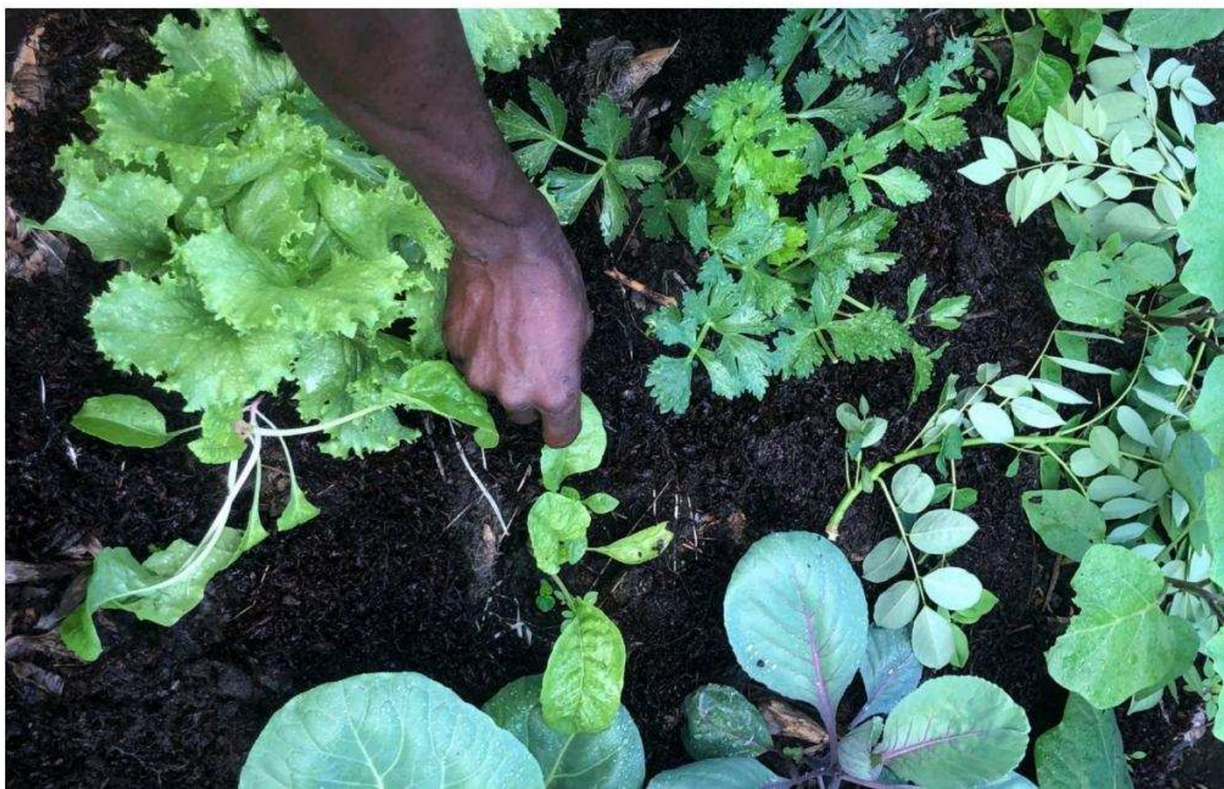
Organic matter, including banana trunks, is often used to build up the level of the soil in these raised beds and provide a fertile medium for growing vegetables.

"Many of the techniques we teach are not new but have been lost over generations as chemical-based agriculture gained prominence," says Stina Herberg, director of RVA. She notes that many RVA alumni are working in renewable energy, ecological farming, climate activism, social work, poverty reduction, livelihood creation, and other sustainable development fields around the world.

As is the case with many other CARICOM nations, SVG suffers the brunt of the impact of climate change.

Over the last decade or so, this archipelagic nation in the southeastern Caribbean, has had to contend with the impact of climate change, including more frequent and intense hurricanes, flooding, and early-onset and extended dry spells. These natural hazards have had an impact on the manner in which food is grown, especially in home gardens belonging to families who may not have the resources to pay for water storage or cannot afford to use expensive potable water for home gardening.

The RVA's home gardening project has been supported by several donors, including The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, The University of the West Indies and the University of Exeter along with funding from the Global Challenges Research Fund of UK Research and Innovation, Global Water Partnership, GEF SGP, Mustique Charitable Trust, UN Women and a variety of Government and private sector partners.



ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENHANCING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION THROUGH SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CARIBBEAN

By River Providence
Project Development Specialist, CCCCC

The Caribbean faces a plethora of varied challenges. These include social issues like crime, economic challenges from high sovereign debt loads, and exposure to health crises that snowball into socioeconomic and cultural issues. Possibly no other challenge is as constant as the region's susceptibility to natural disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes. These challenges are compounded by the ever-present existential risk of climate change, as it affects the frequency and severity of common natural hazards.

According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, risk is the potential loss of life, injury, or destroyed or damaged assets that could occur to a system, society, or community in a specific period. Risk can be disaggregated into a function of the exposure of a community or location to the hazard, the vulnerability of the community or area to the event, and the capacity of the community to respond to the event. Therefore, climate change is a key driver of increased disaster risk. With predictions that the frequency and intensity of hazards will increase, the vulnerability of populations will surely rise as they will encounter job disruptions, economic instability, and food insecurity, to name a few.

"These effects are expected to worsen and will pose a challenge to the region's development."

Many argue that the region is already experiencing the impacts of a changing climate due to communities facing more frequent and intense precipitation events, sea level rise, coastal erosion, increased temperatures, and more variable rainfall patterns. These hazards increase the risks to local populations by decreasing the economic capacity of the state and individuals to respond to these more frequent events; similarly, the hazards also increase the vulnerability of the population by placing pressure on social services such as healthcare. These effects are expected to worsen and will pose a challenge to the region's development. For example, vulnerabilities are expected to increase in the coastal zones or along waterways, which are affected by sea level rise, coastal erosion, and saltwater intrusion.

Adapting to climate change and its impacts means that Caribbean countries will have to focus on both

current and future environmental challenges while addressing current physical, social, and economic barriers to their development objectives. Despite this, the region has enacted ambitious national socioeconomic development plans and bold low-carbon transition targets in the energy sector. The latter has been particularly important in attempting to catalyse local action as well as facilitate international investment in decarbonization and sustainable development.

Investment in sustainable infrastructure can assist with reducing future impacts of climate change and natural disasters by having greater access to necessary services during and post-event and reducing the property damage, thereby reducing the economic cost of events. This includes the construction of climate-resilient roads, sea walls, drainage systems, and the implementation of building codes that can allow infrastructure to better withstand extreme weather events.

In recent years, the energy sector has been a leverage point for sustainable infrastructure investment and still presents a key opportunity for low-carbon sustainable development in the region. With the abundant renewable energy resources available in the region, the increased demand for energy as countries develop can be met by harnessing these resources. By continuing to invest in solar PV, hydro, wind and geothermal energy, Caribbean countries can promote decentralised energy generation, self-generation, and a diversified energy matrix. These factors all contribute to a more robust and resilient energy infrastructure, with more capability to withstand and come back online after a disaster event.

In addition to clean energy infrastructure, sustainable infrastructure includes reconstructed wetlands, and the pursuit of nature-based solutions that include the conversation of forests, coral reefs, and other systems that provide critical ecosystem services such as coastal zone protection, flood control, erosion control, and water filtration services. By investing in these 'green' sustainable infrastructure initiatives, nations and communities can enhance natural defenses against natural disasters, reducing the cost of recovery and response to disaster events and mitigating the impacts of climate change. For example, by enhancing a naturally occurring mangrove forest, a community can reduce the exposure of transportation, telecommunication, and housing infrastructure to storm surges.

In integrating sustainable infrastructure solutions when adapting to climate change, governments and the private sector must consider gender and social inclusion alongside traditional financial metrics of success. Infrastructure must meet the needs of all members of society, including men, women, children, the elderly, and the disabled. By

implementing socially inclusive infrastructure, members of underserved groups in a country can reduce their vulnerability in the event of a disaster due to continued access to essential social services such as telecommunications, healthcare, and transportation.

Cost remains a significant barrier to progress in the implementation of sustainable infrastructure and climate change adaptation initiatives. Rethinking the way traditional infrastructure and services are employed and operated can be a barrier to implementation, particularly when there is a high upfront cost to investing in new, sustainable solutions over maintaining the status quo. However, in situations where economic and financial analysis supports solutions with a reduced maintenance cost that promotes resilience and reduced economic impact due to climate change effects, governments in the region must continue to employ sustainable infrastructure solutions. This compounds the importance of robust financial and socioeconomic modelling to backstop public infrastructure development.

While the Caribbean continues to be vulnerable and exposed to natural disasters and climate change impacts, there are tools available to adapt to these impacts while contributing to national development targets. Governments need to continue their path to low-carbon development by expanding their low-carbon energy programs to include more aspects of sustainable infrastructure. This will help them meet the short-term and long-term needs of local communities as they navigate a warmer, more uncertain future.

COVERING CLIMATE CHANGE – BECOMING A CLIMATE-AWARE JOURNALIST IN THE CARIBBEAN

By Donna King-Brathwaite, Environmental Educator, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Barbados and Tecla Fontenard, Communications Specialist, CCCCC

At a time when our very existence is hinged upon our ability to address and adapt to the "Triple Planetary Crisis" – climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss - we must be cognizant of the fact that accurate and frequent information sharing is paramount and must be a part of our arsenal if we are to survive this rapidly intensifying crisis. For our region, and the world, climate change remains at the forefront of this crisis for many.

In 2020, The Association of Caribbean Media Workers (ACM) published a book entitled, "Reporting the climate crisis, A handbook for Caribbean journalists". The book was written by University of the West Indies (UWI) lecturer and climate change expert, Dr. Dale Rankine along with Mr. Steve Maximay, science advisor to the ACM and veteran Caribbean journalist, Mr. Wesley Gibbings. In this book, they describe climate change as "an overarching area of public concern" and by this virtue, emphasized the need for more rigorous coverage of climate change that reflects

its evident impact on all facets of life in the Caribbean.

The authors observed that the impact of climate change on media practice had revolutionized journalistic approaches to cross-cutting issues. And because of this, the "traditional norms of newsroom "beats" needed to be re-examined, to take into account the new demands of reporting this global problem.

"The very practice of journalism, through its gate-keeping functions (bearing in mind the competitive claims of social media), includes deconstructing and validating context, opinions, and angles. These cannot be considered to be of neutral value within the information marketplace". (Rankine, Maximay & Gibbings, 2020)

At the same time, they noted that "sustained coverage of the science and public policy dimensions of climate change also has the potential to recalibrate news agendas, reframe public discourse, and address the apathy around the issue."
Within the Caribbean context, year after year, we see an increasing need for better and more sustained journalistic coverage of climate change. To be climate-aware, journalists must become excellent storytellers that use narrative structures which are built upon credible sources, demonstrate facts and trends, and provide a diversity of opinions.

This means, "journalists and their news organisations require access to more wholesome, user-friendly material for application as empirical contexts, in the development of stories."

Rankine, Maximay, and Gibbings agree that "meeting this journalistic mandate on climate change requires greater competency to understand scientific nuance and debate, greater vigilance to monitor related public policy, and stronger interpretive skills to process and present vital connections."

At the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC), the role that traditional journalists play in shaping public opinion is well known. Recent findings of climate change surveys on Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) in 5 Caribbean countries indicate that

radio and television are still in the top 4 most popular media sources of climate change information.

In the context of Barbados, host to a recent workshop on Communication on Climate Change for the Media, funded by the European Union (EU) under the Intra-ACP GCCA+ Programme, another similar survey conducted between 2005-2006, showed that most of the adults learned about climate change via the media, especially TV, whereas, most of the children learned about it at school, especially during geography classes. Fifteen percent of the adults surveyed also responded that they learned about climate change at school only. While very few respondents, at that time, learned about climate change through the internet only.

About one quarter of the adults learned about climate change from a mixture of sources including the media, work, conversations, school, and personal experience; whereas 6% of children responded that they learned from a mixture of sources.

To keep this pivotal role that journalists and media experts play in communication on climate change, in sharp focus, the CCCCC in partnership with the European Union and the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), launched the inagural climate change awards for regional journalists, as part of the prestigious CBU Awards, on February 1st 2023. These new climate-related award categories represent a shifting of the gears for messaging and communicating about climate change in the region.

Following this launch, the CCCCC's workshop held in Barbados on February 2nd, resulted in the coming together of media and communications experts from government ministries and media houses, in an interactive, informative and educational session. The

"Within the Caribbean context, year after year, we see an increasing need for better and more sustained journalistic coverage of climate change."

Government of Barbados, represented by Mr. Ron Goodridge – Acting Senior Environmental Officer in the Ministry of Environment, gave participants a concise overview of Barbados' situation as it relates to climate change – both the impacts and the actions underway that will address the myriad associated issues.

The sessions were led by experienced facilitators – Mr. Steve Maximay – (Science advisor to the ACM and the CBU) and Ms. Tecla Fontenard (Communications Specialist at the CCCCC).

As part of a regional climate literacy campaign funded by the European Union, the CCCCC will continue to host the series of regional Media Sensitisation Workshops in other Member States of CARIFORUM.

Canada commits $44.8 million to fight Caribbean climate crisis

By Deandre Williamson
Caribbean Climate Justice Journalism Fellow

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gives an address during the 44th CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau, Bahamas. (Photo - Bahamas Information Services/Kemuel Stubbs)

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) know all too well the threats posed by climate change, which prompted Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to announce his commitment of $44.8 million in new funding to tackle the climate crisis in the Caribbean.

Trudeau made this announcement during the 44th CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau, Bahamas on Feb. 16. He said the funding will support projects with regional organizations like the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center and the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund that will improve marine and coastal ecosystem management, increase water security, and help governments better respond to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

"We know that one of the significant challenges that many CARICOM countries face in dealing with climate change is accessing climate and concessional financing," Trudeau added.

He applauded Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley's leadership of the Bridgetown Initiative,

which has reenergized the conversation on international financial institutional reform so that SIDS can better respond to the overlapping health, climate, debt, and liquidity crises affecting many CARICOM members.

According to the World Economic Forum, the Bridgetown Initiative is a proposal to reform the world of development finance, particularly how rich countries help poor countries cope with and adapt to climate change. The Bridgetown Initiative has three key steps. Outlined by the World Economic Forum, the first step involves changing some of the terms around how funding is loaned and repaid. The second step calls for more climate cash, as Barbados is asking for development banks to lend an additional $1 trillion to developing nations for climate resilience. The third step is to set up a new mechanism – with private-sector backing – to fund climate mitigation and reconstruction after a climate disaster.

Canada can relate to the devastation the Caribbean faces when climate disasters occur. In 2022, Canada had its share of a climate disaster when Hurricane Fiona ripped through Nova Scotia.

“Climate change is here and it’s real. Canada experienced this first hand when Hurricane Fiona devastated Atlantic Canada last fall,” Trudeau said.

“We saw how fragile island ecosystems can be when the storm took lives swept away homes and destroyed our beaches and coasts.”

But the Caribbean has experienced more storms, with some of the most recent ones being Hurricanes Dorian, Maria, Juan and Harvey. The frequency of the storms and rising sea levels make the region vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change.

Trudeau told CARICOM Heads of Government that “Caribbean nations understand this issue better than most, and you have seized this challenge to become global leaders on climate action.”

CARICOM leaders have been advocating for climate justice and climate financing for years and they are still waiting for some financial pledges from developed nations to be fulfilled.

In his address, Trudeau acknowledged the strong ties between Canada and the Caribbean and announced plans to renew the pledge for the CARIBCAN trade program.

“I want to announce today that Canada is seeking a renewal of its waiver from the World Trade Organization for our CARIBCAN trade program to ensure that goods from the region can continue to enter Canada duty free beyond 2023,” Trudeau said. “CARIBCAN was first announced by Canada at this same meeting in Nassau in 1985. So, it’s only fitting that we renew that pledge today.”

He explained that in order to have truly sustainable, long lasting economic prosperity, countries need robust dynamic trade.

"In 2021, Canada's two-way merchandise trade with CARICOM countries reached $1.9 billion, with bilateral trade in services reaching $3.9 billion," Trudeau added.

"There are opportunities for business in all our economies in emerging sectors like clean technology, green infrastructure, renewable energy, and more."

This story was published with the support of the Caribbean Climate Justice Journalism Fellowship, which is a joint venture of Climate Tracker and Open Society Foundations.

NEWS FROM THE CCCCC

Launch of the I deserve a #BetterClimate4MyHealth campaign

The CCCCC launched the #Betterclimate4MyHealth campaign on January 26, 2023, inspiring young people across 16 CARIFORUM countries to address health-related issues caused by the climate crisis. Using real-life stories and evidence, the campaign will motivate youth to become climate action advocates. From January to June 2023, various activities will take place, including a youth forum, a clean-up initiative, and competitions for art, photo, poetry, and climate and health stories. The campaign is in collaboration with PAHO/WHO and is part of the EU/CARIFORUM Strengthening Climate Resilient Health Systems project.

Excellence in climate change coverage to be awarded in August 2023 during CBU Annual General Meeting

On February 1, 2023, together with Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) and financial support from the European Union, we launched a call for entries into the Caribbean Media Awards (CMA). The awards will recognize the best in climate change-related news and other media content creations for 2022 as part of awareness raising initiatives of climate change and its impacts. This is part of a broader media sensitization programme to engage with and incentivize journalists and media personnel who use their various media platforms to educate people about climate change. Entries in twelve climate change categories will be judged and the winning pieces will receive awards during the CBU's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August in Antigua and Barbuda. All media professionals who are citizens of CARIFORUM Member States can enter to win **here.**

Media sensitization workshops in Barbados and St Kitts

As part of the EU-GCCA+ Time is Running Out Climate Literacy Campaign, we started a series of media workshops aimed at sensitization media reporters, journalists, and communications personnel in various government agencies about climate change communications. Recognising that reporting climate science concepts to non-science audiences with accuracy can be challenging, the training programme is designed to equip them with first-hand experiences, information, and tools to champion climate change stories and improve the frequency and accuracy of climate change reporting. So far, workshops were held in Barbados and St Kitts targeted at local participants where they were provided with basic skills in framing news stories that amplify human interest angles and help guide local climate actions that benefit communities and Small Island Developing States in general.

Visit of Patricia Prosser and announcement of the approval of CAD12 million for GAC project to enhance eco-systems and coastal protection for climate change resilience in the Caribbean

We welcomed Ms. Patricia Prosser, Senior Development Officer of the Caribbean Regional Development Programme at the Global Affairs Canada (GAC) on February 22, 2023, for her first visit to the center and Belize. The visit aimed to provide her with hands-on experience of climate-stressed coral reefs and coastal eco-systems, which will be the focus of a new CAD 12 million project funded by the GAC, implemented by the CCCCC over the next four years. The project aims to enhance ecosystems and coastal protection for climate change resilience in seven Caribbean countries.

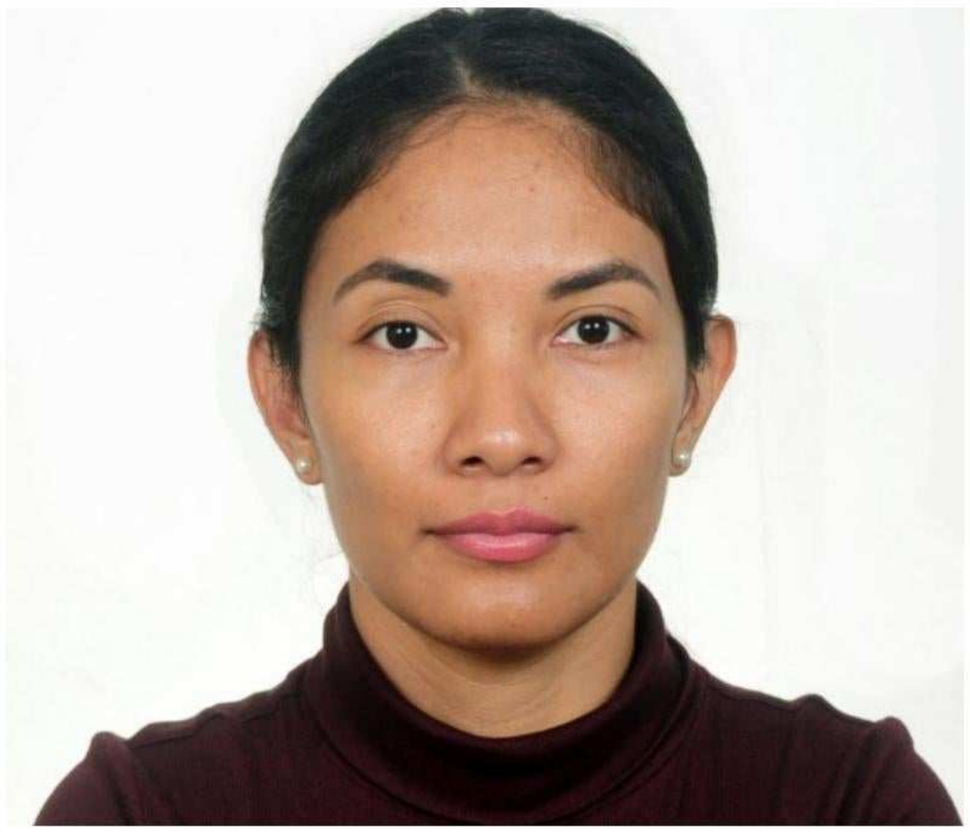
CCCCC Welcomes New Staff

Mr. Norman Young
System Administrator

Norman Young is an experienced IT professional with over 30 years of industry experience. He began his career at Belize Telemedia Limited and worked as a Systems Administrator at Belize Electricity Limited. Later, he served as the Director of Information Technology at the Belize Tourism Board, where he was responsible for IT strategy and day-to-day operations. Norman founded Fusion Information Technology Solutions, where he acted as the Managing Director and Senior Technical Consultant. He has recently joined CCCCC as a System Administrator, focusing on structure and governance. Norman's expertise includes network infrastructure and enterprise data center design and implementation, as well as IT governance and business continuity planning.

Mr. Keron Lamb
IT Technician

Keron Lamb is an IT professional who holds an associate degree in network administration. He began his career in IT at a young age, initially working in repairs. In 2005, Keron joined the Development Finance Corporation, where he focused on virtualization using VMware, backup using Veeam backup and replication, and Microsoft 365, with expertise in Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint, and PowerApps. Keron has recently joined CCCCC as IT Technician.



Ms. Diana Ruiz
Project Officer

Diana Ruiz is a Project Officer in the Project Management Unit. She holds a master's degree in Natural Resource Management (Climate Change Stream) from the University of the West Indies. Diana joined the Centre in August 2011 as an Economic Assistant and later became a Science Officer, where she sensitized CARICOM member states and supported capacity-building workshops on the Caribbean Climate Online Risk and Adaptation Tool (CCORAL) and the Caribbean Weather Impacts Group (CARIWIG) tools developed by the Centre and its Partners. Diana was an AOSIS Fellow in 2019, working with the Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations, and supported the Belize Chair in 2020. She also worked on short-term projects with IOM, FAO, and the Government of Belize.

Ms. Sapphire Vital
Project Development Specialist

Sapphire Vital, Project Development Specialist, mobilizes climate finance by developing transformative mitigation and adaptation projects. With over five years of experience in sustainable infrastructure, Sapphire provided development support to renewable energy and energy efficiency projects as a core part of the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency's Project Preparation Facility, advanced critical start-up activities of a rural electrification project in Northern Uganda with Mandulis Energy, codeveloped a long-term infrastructure assessment for the Government of Saint Lucia, and coordinated a waste management project in Dominica. Sapphire holds an MSc in Environmental Change and Management from the University of Oxford and a BSc in Civil with Environmental Engineering from the University of the West Indies.

Ms. River Providence
Project Development Specialist

A clean energy investment professional with expertise in structuring and financial modeling of renewable energy and energy efficiency interventions in the CARICOM sub-region. She holds an MSc in Climate Change Management and Finance from Imperial College London and a BSc in Energy and Environmental Physics and Mathematics from the University of the West Indies, Mona. River founded Crown Green Energy Services, advising clean energy stakeholders in the OECS, and previously worked as an investment analyst at Camco Clean Energy, designing renewable energy projects in emerging markets. She has experience in project management, clean tech investment, and fundraising for Caribbean clean energy facilities worth over USD 850 million. River recently joined the CCCCC as a Project Development Specialist.

Dr. Claire Durant
Project Development Specialist

Dr. Claire Durant is a consultant with 20 years of experience in national and regional development and research projects in the Caribbean, specializing in rural development, climate-smart agriculture, food and nutrition, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation. She has a Ph.D. in Biology from Imperial College of Science Technology and Medicine, London, and an MSc in Project Management and Evaluation from UWI, Cave Hill. Some of her recent projects include supporting Dominica to become the world's first climate-resilient nation, designing a National Carbon Credit Initiative for Barbados, and developing the "Building Climate Resilience in Barbados' Agriculture Sector — Irrigation and Wider Adaptation Project." Dr. Durant is also an author, science education expert, and winner of the Royal Society of Chemistry Inclusion and Diversity Fund Award for youth projects.

Making youth part of the climate solution

By Ashely Lashley
Executive Director
The Ashley Lashley Foundation, and the HEY Campaign

Undoubtedly the youth are the future, and they are the ones who are tasked with not only governing the planet but are carrying the keys to solving the climate question, whether they are aware or not.

What is concerning is that many young people are the ones more susceptible to being impacted by the climate crisis. For example, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) stated in their climate risk analysis report that "one (1) billion children are at an extremely high risk of the impacts of the climate crisis", as it is "affecting their access to food, clean air, and water, healthcare, and education".

In addition to that, the former UNICEF Executive Director, Henrietta Fore, explained that "climate change is deeply inequitable. While no child is responsible for rising global temperatures, they will pay the highest costs."

Still, youth should and inevitably will have to shoulder the responsibility of figuring out ways of solving one of mother earth's most complex problems. Those young people who live around the cool blue waters which make up the Caribbean seas to those who have observed melting snowy tops of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania are aware of what is happening. What will be different is that by 2050 those glaciers at Mount Kilimanjaro are expected to melt and the younger generation who will be around will have a pivotal role to play in preventing this.

The Ashley Lashley Foundation, a Barbados-based charity that was launched in December 2019, by Barbadian UNICEF Youth Advocate Ashley Lashley has answered the call to find innovative ways to answer the climate question. Although the charity focuses on a range of social development issues, particularly as it relates to health and children's rights, there is also heavy emphasis placed on the environment.

Currently, the organization is positioned as one of the few youth-led charities in the Eastern Caribbean with a unique, though important focus on climate change.

Take for example the work done by the Foundation in 2020, where the Foundation founded the HEY (Healthy and Environmentally Friendly Youth) Campaign. This regional initiative focused primarily on climate change and health with a global outreach. As many as 100 HEY Ambassadors from the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia between the ages of 9-27 years old are taking part actively in the campaign.
While keeping the focus in mind that young people are the future, the HEY campaign sought and still seeks to build bridges between youth in the Caribbean and around the World.

Although solving the climate question is not so much about finding a theoretical answer but rather finding practical solutions, The Ashley Lashley Foundation is laser-focused to bring about a greater sense of awareness to some of the world's biggest environmental issues. All of us are impacted by climate change: hotter temperatures, more flooding, increasing wildfires, and more storms but not all of us will have to live with these changing weather patterns 10-25 years from now. It's important that youth be given a seat at the table, and that their skills are not only engaged but are well harnessed. For this reason, in 2022, the Foundation provided funds to several young people across the globe to undertake climate-related projects under the HEY global climate fund. This resulted in a hydroponic farm in Barbados, an araw-kalinga Box constructed in the Philippines, and an eco-artisan women's centre in Guatemala.

Also in 2022, the Foundation took bold climate change initiatives with youth in the following ways:

- Undertook the Eco Active Youth campaign, where 4000 school students across 21 schools were re-educated on how to engage in climate action, and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle by practicing the 3 R's
- Hosted the Barbados Youth Climate Action Summit which was a platform for intergenerational dialogue between stakeholders and youth.
- Launched the global HEY Parliament, aimed at mobilizing and training youth to engage government officials in a parliament-like setting .

For 2023, the HEY Ambassador's programme have assembled leading climate change activists for a 9-month intergenerational program with the support of UNICEF and other key stakeholders.

My Climate Testimony

BY DEANEY GELLIZEAU

LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Dear World Leaders,

How much more pain and losses must we endure before we realize that it is imperative that our actions be changed? For decades we have ignored the consequences of our actions even to this day. Likewise, we have raised awareness with the ulterior motive of gaining public favor or even remaining ignorant in the name of economics and other fancy jargon.

I began this journey three (3) years ago during the COVID-19 pandemic as a research project for my college debate club. What seemed like a mere assignment has changed my life forever due to the truths about our current predicament being revealed from all areas of society.

Being guided by the philosophy "we don't dream to become; it is our actions that determine the outcome of our future"; there was no hesitation to become an avid climate activist and expose myself to the multifaceted perspectives of persons from across various backgrounds all over the world and their contributions towards the climate change battle.

Deaney Gellizeau is a climate and youth activist from St Vincent and the Grenadines, who is driving youth participation in sustainable development matters

I have definitely learned this important lesson from my experiences; real climate action is not simply political will or rallying or being in despair. Real Climate Action is understanding and positively responding to the fact that if we **DO NOTHING** then there will be **NO future**. Just as we were able to implement many innovations, the world has achieved many significant feats.

Therefore, I call on governments, leaders, and the entire world in this fight; **IF WE DO NOTHING**, then this global crisis will surely destroy **OUR future**.

From a fellow Earthling,
Deaney

Do you have a story?

Join us in putting the spotlight on Climate Change related news and issues, one Caribbean perspective at a time.

Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre

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