



SUMMARY

HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON GREEN ALLIANCE

Building bridges with the Caribbean for resilience
15 December 2020 – 15:45-17:00 (CET) – Online event

Introduction

The high-level panel underlined the commitment of Caribbean states and the European Union (EU) to ambitious global climate action. Co-hosted by the German Federal Foreign Office and the European Commission, it demonstrated that action on climate change mitigation and resilience to climate-fragility risks will be core pillars for the future partnership between the two regions. Panellists made a strong call for addressing the technical and financing challenges of implementing mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Eighty participants from around the world attended the high-level panel, including representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Environment and Finance from Caribbean and Latin American countries; top-level officials from Caribbean regional organisations such as the Caribbean Community, the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA); and EU member states and institutions.


Building on the conclusions from the May [2019 Latin America-Caribbean Berlin Conference](#) and on lessons learnt from Caribbean-EU cooperation, the panel discussed:

- Critical security risks related to climate change in the Caribbean region;
- Good practices and entry points for the Caribbean-EU partnership to address climate risks and meet climate targets at a local, regional and international level;
- Areas of cooperation between the EU, its member states and the Caribbean states that would bring the most added value and impact on climate action and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) implementation.

Opening remarks

In his opening remarks, *Deputy Director General for the Department of International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission* **Martin Seychell** noted that the new Post-Cotonou Agreement represented an opportunity for the renewed partnership between the Caribbean and the EU. He reminded participants of the historic and cultural ties between the two regions, and their like-mindedness when it came to defending global goods and multilateralism. He also reiterated the need for ambitious, joint objectives for climate action, including the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Mr. Seychell emphasised the longstanding partnership between the two regions, with the EU contributing nearly EUR 700 million to programmes on climate action, sustainable energy and resilience building in the Caribbean between 2014 and 2020. He also noted the need to bring in private capital and emphasised the Caribbean's great potential for renewable energy.



José Julio Gómez, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, focused on the importance of risk management and adaptation strategies in his opening remarks. He stressed the significance of building bridges to achieve resilience, overcoming political and financial challenges, strengthening democratic institutions and social protection mechanisms, and sharing and exchanging technological advances. Cooperation between the two regions, he highlighted, was key to achieving these goals, as “only together we will prevail.” Mr. Gómez reminded participants of the urgency of addressing the consequences of both the COVID-19 pandemic and the global climate crisis, but also of the opportunities these offered to provide global answers through renewed multilateral efforts.

Roundtable discussion

During the roundtable discussion, all panellists offered insights on priorities for addressing climate-related security risks and enhancing resilience, opportunities for financing green transformational ambitions, and the role of a Caribbean-EU partnership to advance action on climate-related security risks at the UN level and beyond.



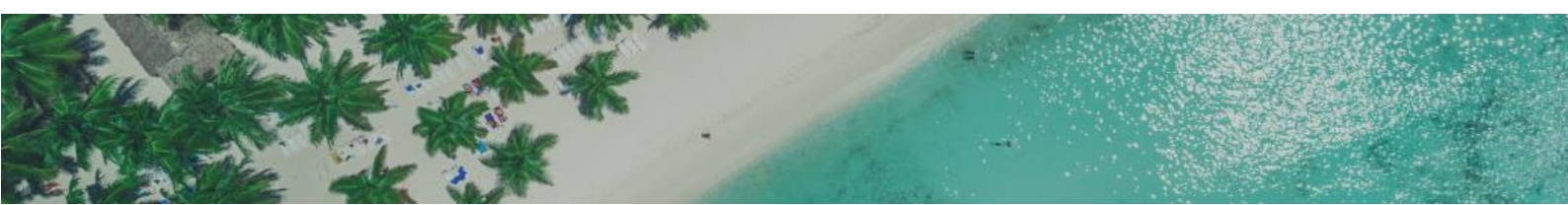
Screenshot of the High-level Panel on Green Alliance during the event

How can Caribbean states address climate-related security risks and enhance resilience?

Francine Baron, CEO of the Climate Resilience Executive Agency of Dominica, remembered how the 2017 hurricane season “woke up” the Caribbean region to the gravity of the climate crisis. Caribbean countries, she noted, experienced first-hand and therefore knew the challenges that climate change poses to development, economic growth and stability, and were taking action to address them. Dominica, for example, had set the goal of becoming the world's first climate resilient nation. To reduce vulnerability and build resilience, Ms. Baron emphasised, it was important to adopt and implement a structured approach, comprising coordinated and cross-sectorial plans and strategies, with a focus on economic diversification. She called on the international community to create bilateral mechanisms for addressing the financial challenges of small island developing states, and to support and facilitate cooperation and transfer of technology for their transformation to low carbon economies.

How can the Caribbean-EU partnership advance shared policy objectives?

Deputy Director General for the Department of International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission **Martin Seychell** highlighted the importance of keeping the climate agenda





centre-stage, despite pressing priorities linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Policymakers need to work to address short-term financial challenges but also implement the necessary transformative changes to ensure a sustainable and resilient recovery, he noted. To this end, flexible funding mechanisms such as the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, which supported multi-country action and peer-to-peer exchanges in sectors that could make a transformational difference, would be key. Mr Seychell further reflected on the EU's cooperative work in the Caribbean, which had focused on developing bankable projects in areas such as regional waste management. He also suggested innovative instruments for leveraging investments, such as risk insurances, guarantees and green bonds, and underlined the importance of policy dialogues and joint work to mainstream climate change in all investment strategies.

How can Caribbean economies become more resilient to climate change? How can private capital be leveraged for projects with green transformational ambition in the region?

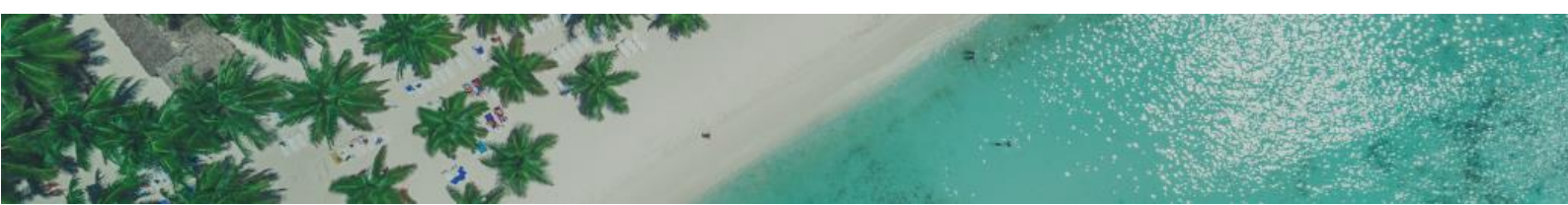
Nigel Clarke, Minister of Finance of Jamaica, recognised that continuous European support had been at the forefront of efforts to address climate change risks in the Caribbean region. However, he also stressed the importance of following this agenda through with action. In particular, there was a need to identify ways for adequately funding responses to climate risks. He called for reducing climate risks in the region and beyond, and suggested regional catastrophe bonds and public-private partnership investments for resilient infrastructure as approaches to consider. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Mr. Clarke noted, should also focus on providing Caribbean states with technical assistance and capacity building to support the design of bankable climate change and green infrastructure projects.

What opportunities exist for green investments in the Caribbean? How can public and private investments help achieve the NDCs?

Ricardo Mourinho Félix, Vice President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), emphasised the long-term relationship between the EIB and Caribbean states. He described EIB's significant portfolio of investments in infrastructure, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in the region. EIB's commitment to this agenda has remained strong, including through providing technical assistance on regulatory frameworks and policies to support the achievement of renewable energy targets and assisting Caribbean countries to achieve their NDCs. Attracting private investments in the region's energy sector was important, Mr Félix noted, but several challenges remained. The EIB could play a supportive role in attracting private investment and help to overcome some of the existing challenges, including by supporting private sector access to financial markets and public-private partnership risk sharing strategies.

How can Caribbean and EU members of the UNSC advance UN system action on climate-related security risks?

Niels Annen, Minister of State of the German Federal Foreign Office, highlighted the importance of considering and addressing the nexus between climate change and security in the region. For Caribbean countries, climate change represented an existential threat. Vulnerable groups such as women and the elderly were especially at risk, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were adding an additional layer of challenges. In the Caribbean, the direct and indirect consequences of climate change could thus lead to political instability, social unrest, and increased crime rates – as a [recent study](#) highlighted. Addressing the nexus between climate change and security has been and continues to be a priority of Germany at the United Nations Security Council. Mr. Annen thus invited Caribbean countries to join the Group of Friends on Climate and Security and to put disaster risk management at the core of Caribbean-EU cooperation.



Conclusion

The discussion with the audience touched on many important issues. Participants underlined the importance of loss and damage mechanisms to respond to natural disasters, and the urgency of finding viable financing solutions for mitigation, adaptation and the transformative processes necessary to deliver on the EU and Caribbean countries' Paris commitments. The Caribbean resilient framework coordinated by CDEMA was highlighted as a potentially good instrument to shape investments to this end. Engagement with the new U.S. administration on the Paris Agreement and the Team Europe approach could present other important opportunities to advance the agenda. Participants saw positive momentum for extending the cooperation between the EU and Caribbean states to promote a long-term response to climate change and the risks arising from it in the region and beyond.

Tweets

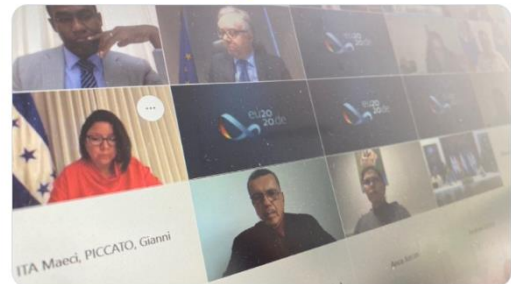
Climate Diplomacy @ClimateDiplo · Dec 14
 How can joint #ClimateAction through the Caribbean-EU #partnership address #ClimateChange & security impacts? On December 15th, the #GreenAlliancePanel2020 will seek to find answers to these questions. Prep reading •• climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-...

@GermanyDiplo #EULAC #EU2020DE



3 replies 5 likes

Marianne Van Steen @VanSteenEU · Dec 15
 #EuropeanUnion and #LatinAmerica #Caribbean countries reaffirm their solid partnership and determination to fight climate change. Thank you Minister @dmigelclarkeja for your valuable participation in the EU LAC HighLevelPanel on Green Alliance 🙌



5 replies 10 likes

Climate Diplomacy @ClimateDiplo · Dec 15
 Today @GermanyDiplo will discuss how joint #ClimateAction & #ResilienceBuilding can address #ClimateChange and its security impacts & Caribbean-EU partnership contribution #EULAC #EU2020DE
 For more information on climate risks in the #Caribbean climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-...

Beatrice Mosello @BeatriceMosello · Dec 15
 Really looking forward to the #GreenAlliancePanel2020 on #climatechange and #resiliencebuilding in the #Caribbean and around the world today!

For more on #climate & #fragility in the Caribbean climate-security-expert-network.org/sites/climate-...

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