



USAID Eastern and Southern Caribbean Regional Climate Symposium

Session IV: Listening to the Field: Sectoral Impacts of Climate Change

June 23rd, 2021, 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. EDT

Post-session Summary

Background

The fourth session of the United States Agency for International Development Eastern and Southern Caribbean Mission (USAID/ESC) regional climate symposium took place on Wednesday, June 23rd. The session was moderated by Leisa Perch from SAEDI Consulting and featured speakers: Milton Haughton from the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), Ignatius Jean from the Caribbean Water and Sewerage Association (CAWASA), Cherri-Ann Farquharson from the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), Kistian Flemming from the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and Jhannel Tomlinson from the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN) in Jamaica. The panelists highlighted cutting-edge innovations to help transform the water, energy, agriculture, and fisheries sectors over the next decade.

Highlights

Milton Haughton gave a brief overview and context of how climate impacts have disproportionately affected the fishing sector and emphasized that Caribbean lives and culture “center around the sea and depend on coastal and marine sources.” **Ignatius Jean** remarked how extreme weather events have brought challenges in the water sector including changes in the water cycle as well as impacts on freshwater supply. He highlighted the Regional Strategic Action Plan for Building Governance and Resilience in the Water Sector (RSAP) which calls for the increase in energy efficiency in water supply, the need for more capacity-building and greater public awareness. **Cherri-Ann Farquharson**, then spoke of how climate change impacts the energy sector, primarily through an increase in demand, noting that the energy sector is also the largest contributor to climate change. She gave an overview of CCREEE’s strategy to facilitate an energy transition through the five P’s principles at the center of their work: Plan, Projects, Policy, Partnerships and People.

With regard to the agriculture sector, **Kistian Flemming** highlighted the negative impacts that climate change has had on this sector due to droughts as well as loss and damage (to farming communities) from intense hurricanes. He noted the need for efficient water management, sustainable production practices and value-added in processing, including through simple solutions for storage, freezing and drying. **Jhannel Tomlinson** then brought in the youth perspective noting the significant impacts climate change and COVID-19 has had on young people, ranging from reduced access to school to lower incomes earned by their caregivers and limited

employment opportunities. She called for more inclusive processes, urging that in addition to climate experts, it is also important to include individuals in the consultation and decision-making processes who are suffering from these impacts in their daily lives such as women, youth, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Key takeaways:

- Vulnerable and marginalized populations are among the most affected by both climate and COVID-19 impacts. It is crucial to actively engage these groups in the process of building resilience including through policy development and implementation.
- An area that can help transform various sectors is research, including on the opportunities within the blue economy. Additionally, other key factors include: ensuring solutions are contextually relevant to the region and driven by science, evidence and innovation.
- Strong public-private sector partnerships can also help to enhance resilience by creating business opportunities and encouraging innovation.
- No matter the sector, it is critical to create a safe space to bring different perspectives from all sectors and to adopt a multidisciplinary, inclusive and integrated approach to strengthening climate resilience.

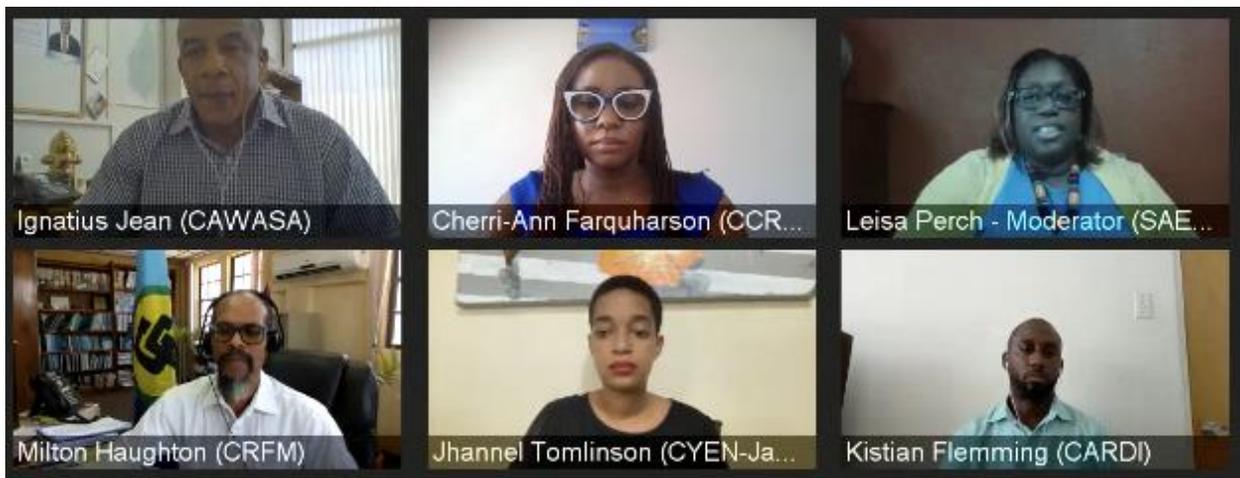


Image (top left to right): Ignatius Jean (CAWASA), Cherri-Ann Farquharson (CCREEE), Leisa Perch (SAEDI Consulting), Milton Haughton (CRFM), Jhanel Tomlinson (CYEN-Jamaica), and Kistian Flemming (CARDI).



To learn more about climate issues in the Caribbean region highlighted by speakers, check out the following resources:

- [Regional Strategic Action Plan for Governance and Building Climate Resilience in Water Sector in the Caribbean](#)
- CCREEE's [Strategic Programs](#) for CARICOM Region

The recording of the session and the final symposium report will be available on Climatelinks [here](#).

ABOUT THE USAID EASTERN AND SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN REGIONAL CLIMATE SYMPOSIUM

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Eastern and Southern Caribbean Mission (ESC) hosted an eight-session climate change symposium from June 16 to June 30. This virtual symposium focused on renewing and strengthening existing regional partnerships by encouraging dialogue about climate change as well as the sharing of information and opportunities.

Throughout the symposium, high-level speakers from USAID/ESC and its partners discussed the ecological and human dimensions of climate change, contextualized the Eastern and Southern Caribbean region's response, and sought solutions to address impacts.