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EARTH CONSCIOUS



Forest Facts

The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2011 as the International Year of Forests (Forests 2011). Here are some interesting quick facts about forests that you can share:

- Forests cover 31 percent of total global land area.
- Forests store more than 1 trillion tons of carbon.
- Over 1.6 billion people's livelihoods depend on forests.
- Trade in forest products was estimated at \$327 billion in 2004.
- Forests are home to 80 percent of terrestrial biodiversity.
- 30 percent of forests are used for production of wood and non-wood products.
- Forests are home to 300 million people around the world.
- Deforestation accounts for 12 to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.



CLIMATE CHANGE in the CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) reaffirms its commitment to work with Member States

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Our Cover

The lotus flower is one of the most ancient and deepest symbols of our planet. It grows in muddy water and rises above the surface to bloom with remarkable beauty.

EARTH
CONSCIOUS

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We're at the half-way point from the next global climate change conference that will take place towards the end of the year in Durban, South Africa and which will hopefully build on the successes coming from the Cancun, Mexico conference.

Already the UNFCCC system has been busy with meetings including the first round of mitigation workshops held in Bangkok, Indonesia in April.

As we prepare for the publishing of this current June issue of Earth Conscious, the second set of workshops are about to begin in Bonn, Germany.

In April, the Transitional Committee for the design of the Green Climate Fund finally took place in Mexico City, Mexico.

Countries had missed a crucial mid-March deadline to start work on the important Green Climate Fund which is expected to reach US\$100 billion a year by 2020 to aid developing countries fight climate change – a promise made in December 2009 by rich countries at the conclusion of the Copenhagen, Denmark conference.

The Transitional Committee is composed of seven members from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean respectively, two members from both Small

Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and 15 from developed countries.

As countries prepare for their Bonn meeting, Christiana Figueres, the UN Climate Chief urged governments to take the right track to avoid dangerous climate change.

Latest estimates from the International Energy Agency (IEA) indicate that greenhouse gas emissions from world energy generation reached record levels in 2010.

Ms. Figueres said they are a stark warning to governments to provide strong new progress this year towards global solutions to climate change.

The latest IEA estimates should build further momentum by countries to push ahead with the important agenda items in Bonn so that governments at their Durban meeting can take decisive decisions to establish a new global climate change regime to replace the Kyoto Protocol.

The first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol – a 1997 international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – expires in 2012.

Linda Hutchinson-Jafar

Caribbean resolute on addressing Climate Change issues

The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) reaffirming its commitment to addressing climate change says there is clearly much work to be done this year as the Caribbean and other groups move towards achieving an effective climate change framework.

Referring to last month's Twenty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the CCCCC said leaders reinforced the urgent need to address climate change in the region. The Communiqué issued after the conference sets out key climate change priorities for CARICOM countries.

The conference also welcomed a report from the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Stephenson King on the outcome of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP 16) which was held last December in Cancun, Mexico.

The outcomes at Cancun represented progress for many countries and is clearly a stepping stone for future actions and agreements. However, the road ahead is still a bumpy one for the Caribbean, being among the most vulnerable groups affected by climate change. The region has already suffered greatly from the effects of a changing climate and will inevitably suffer severe consequences if strong measures



Dr. Kenrick Leslie

are not taken at this stage, the conference heard.

The Caribbean shares these challenges with wider groups including the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS) and the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), and has over the years, worked

alongside them to secure stronger global efforts to address climate change.

Based on these links, the Heads of Government agreed that CARICOM Member States would make efforts to ensure that there is adequate and balanced representation by competent CARICOM experts, through GRULAC and AOSIS, on the newly formed governance bodies of the UNFCCC.

They also agreed that Member States would collectively sponsor and lobby for the CCCCC to be designated an International Centre on Adaptation. The CCCCC will also support Member States in identifying and preparing appropriate projects, in order to make use of available and emerging resources for climate change adaptation.

"The CCCCC welcomes the opportunity to work with Member States and is firmly committed to this endeavour. Throughout the years we have worked within the Region to support and facilitate projects, programmes and initiatives that build capacity to address climate change especially as it relates to adaptation," the Belize-based Centre said.

"We recognise the immense challenge ahead as the region is already being affected



by the effects of a changing climate change. However, it is important that we also recognise the possibilities for strong responses that exist at this stage.”

It said CARICOM as a collective group has worked effectively throughout the years to negotiate on climate change issues and can continue to play a significant role in crafting an effective global framework for addressing climate change.

The CCCCC has had the privilege of working with Member States to develop their capacity to address challenges posed by climate change and gained their collective agreement on a Regional Climate Change Strategic Plan in 2009.

Heads of Government has requested the CARICOM Secretariat to convene a Joint COHSOD-COTED Meeting to agree on an action plan to address the way forward for the region to follow-up on the outcome of COP-16, preparation for COP 17 and for the implementation of the Regional Climate Change Strategic Plan, among other issues.

In his statement during the High Level Segment at COP 16, CCCCC Executive Director, Dr. Kenrick Leslie, emphasized that: “CARICOM is seeking the highest level of ambition from the negotiations. An

agreement, which will result in the peaking of global concentrations of greenhouse gases by 2015 and a decline to 350 parts per million to give the atmosphere an even chance to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels”.

CARICOM holds the position that emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol are woefully inadequate. Much more must be done and we all have to do our share.

Dr. Leslie also reminded Parties that, “The challenge is not easy. It will require concerted global action to achieve the objectives required. This will require leadership, responsibility, and accountability”. Climate Change is no longer seen as a future threat but as a reality that affects us all today, and while many argue about the causes and the nature of it, it is important to recognize that the world is experiencing dramatic changes which need to be addressed urgently.

For developing countries, every fraction of a degree of further global warming will multiply the massive problems which are already undermining their national development efforts and threatening their physical survival, according to Dr. Leslie.



Virtually the entire population of Jamaica of 2.7 million people will benefit as a result of a US\$15 million loan approved by the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank to increase energy efficiency and security on the island.

The loan will benefit Jamaica's residential, commercial and industrial energy consumers through the development of detailed policies and plans on renewable energy to reduce the country's high dependence on imported petroleum products while moving to cleaner fuels.

"Given the current crisis in energy worldwide, this World Bank loan program is very well timed. It presents a way forward for the country in attacking the serious issue of energy inefficiency, and, along with other complementary projects, will allow us in a relatively short time to become a more productive nation," stated Hillary Alexander, Permanent Secretary in Jamaica's Ministry of Energy and Mining.

The Energy Security and Efficiency Enhancement

Project will contribute to reduced energy costs, increased energy security and improved economic competitiveness. It

also supports efforts to address climate change by contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"The World Bank recognizes that addressing Jamaica's energy needs is crucial for the country to stimulate economic growth and competitiveness. We are pleased that this project supports Jamaica's policy objectives of promoting energy conservation and efficiency and ensuring energy security," said Françoise Clottes, World Bank Director for the Caribbean.

Some specific activities which the project will support include:

- Developing detailed policies, strategies and implementation plans on renewable energy (in particular hydro, wind and biomass), energy efficiency and gas, and on related regulations.
- Strengthening the regulatory framework for private-public partnership monitoring of the energy

sector by building capacity in the Ministry of Energy and Mining and the Office of Utilities Regulation.

- Introducing the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) programme to support off-oil diversification.
- Expanding the energy efficiency testing and labeling capability and information program of Jamaica's Bureau of Standards.
- Promoting solar and wind energy.
- Providing a line of credit/revolving facility through the Development Bank of Jamaica to provide retail financing to the private sector for energy efficiency and renewable energy investments.

"Jamaica's energy policy 2009–2030 seeks to ensure the country's energy security, the provision of affordable energy supplies to all Jamaican consumers, an improved competitive base for the country, as well as sustainable growth and development of the nation.

This loan will help Jamaica as it works to implement this policy and achieve sustainability for the energy sector," said Fitzroy Vidal, Senior Director in Jamaica's Ministry of Energy and Mining.

The US\$15 million loan with a variable spread is payable in 30 years, including a five and a half year grace period.

Ancient corals provide insight on the future of Caribbean reefs



Climate change is already widely recognized to be negatively affecting coral reef ecosystems around the world, yet the long-term effects are difficult to predict. University of Miami (UM) scientists are using the geologic record of Caribbean corals to understand how reef ecosystems might respond to climate change expected for this century. The findings are published in the journal *Geology*.

The Pliocene epoch--more than 2.5 million years ago--can provide some insight into what coral reefs in the future may look like. Estimates of carbon dioxide and global mean temperatures of the period are similar to environmental conditions expected in the next 100 years, explains James Klaus, assistant professor in the Department of Geological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, at UM and lead investigator of this project.

"If the coming century truly is a return to the Pliocene conditions, corals will likely survive, while well-developed reefs may not," says Mr. Klaus, who has a secondary appointment in the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS), at UM. "This could be detrimental to the fish and marine species that rely on the reef structure for their habitat."

The study looks at the fossil records of coral communities from nine countries around the Caribbean region to better understand the nature of these ecosystems during the Pliocene. Today, fossil reefs are often found far from the sea, exposed in road cuts, quarry excavations, or river canyons due to uplift and higher ancient sea levels. In studying the fossil reefs, the researchers uncovered a striking difference between modern and Pliocene coral communities. The Pliocene epoch was characterized by a great diversity of free-living corals.

Unlike most reef corals, these corals lived unattached to the sea floor. Free-living corals were well suited to warm, nutrient-rich seas of the Pliocene. Between eight and four million years ago the origination of new free-living coral species approximately doubled that of other corals. However, free-living corals experienced abrupt extinction as seawater cooled, nutrient levels decreased, and suitable habitat was eliminated in the Caribbean.

Of the 26 species of free-living corals that existed during the Pliocene, only two remain in the Caribbean today. The modern Caribbean coral fauna is comprised of those coral species that survived this extinction event.

The scientists argue that the effects of ongoing climate change are reminiscent of conditions present during the Pliocene and opposite to the environmental factors that caused the extinction and gave rise to modern Caribbean corals.

So, how might the Caribbean coral fauna respond to a predicted return to Pliocene-like conditions within this century?

The free-living corals of the Pliocene would have been well suited to ocean conditions projected for this century. However, the modern reef-building coral fauna may not, explains Donald McNeill, senior scientist in the Division of Marine Geology and Geophysics at UM and co-author of the study.

"Like the Pliocene, we might expect shallow reefs to be increasingly patchy with lower topographic relief," says McNeill. "Rising levels of carbon dioxide will lower the pH in the oceans, a process known as ocean acidification, and will make it difficult for corals to build their limestone skeletons."

Climate change may also increase nutrients in the oceans, boosting populations of marine life that degrade the coral into fine white sand, a process called bioerosion. Reefs built by corals in areas with high bioerosion will be affected the most. Mesophotic reefs, those growing in depths between 30 and 150 meters, have reduced rates of both calcification and bioerosion and thus may be affected less.





(Right –left) Witnessing the installation of the Plastikeep bin at Westmoorings are: Maria Rivas-Mc Millan, Raul Mohammed, Assistant Operations Manager, Guardian Life Portfolio at Servus Limited, Rosanna Farmer and Laura Sanchez of Recycling In Motion (RIM). Photo: Victor Potter

GHL's ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

IMAGINE ONE DAY WAKING UP TO THE REALITY THAT YOU ARE BEING SERVED THE LAST SLICE OF EARTH. Earth being divided into slices? It is not as obscure a concept as you might think. For much of his modern history, man has quantified the planet's resources, like a pie, collectively taking much from the Earth while giving comparatively little in return.

Sadly, corporations have been some of the worst offenders. As one of the Caribbean's leading corporations, Guardian Holdings Limited recognises its responsibility to the environment. For Guardian, "greening" is not a "nice to have" but a responsibility owed to shareholders. The thinking is to incorporate sustainable practices in every aspect of the company's business operations.

Translating that thinking into action internally is Guardian's 'Project Green' campaign. Since its inception in 2007, the project has grown organically and continues to drive home the message of personal and corporate responsibility for using

resources in a way which is sustainable and replenishable.

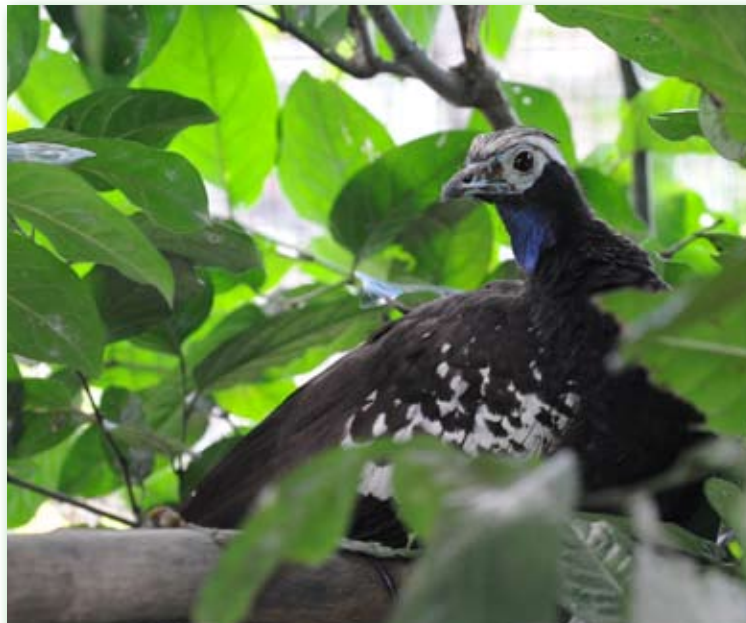
Project Green's mantra is "Transform reality. Live green". This mantra is put into practice in Trinidad and Tobago. Employees are encouraged to recycle penlight batteries, glass-recycling bins are located on every floor and recently the company's participation in a pilot plastic recycling project has turned into an initiative that benefits the Westmoorings community. A recycling company also collects the company's shredded paper, old newspapers and magazines.

Guardian's glass recycling project even pays forward sustainability. When glass bottles are collected, they are delivered to the Lady Hochoy Home in Cocorite for developmentally challenged youngsters and adults. The home sells glass as a means of raising funds to keep its operations afloat. Plastics recycling began through the company's involvement with the Plastikeep project, a pilot project introduced in 2010 aimed at reducing plastic waste deposited in landfills in Trinidad and Tobago. Although the pilot is now over, employees are still encouraged to rinse, squash, bag and bring their plastic waste to drop into an 80 cubic foot receptacle located on the head office compound.

Project Green initiatives focuses on awareness through events, activities and communiqués. Life Pulse, an employee wellness committee run with company support, contributes to the Eco-thrust of employees and families. Every year Life Pulse arranges trips to see the leatherback turtles and the number of participating families grows.



Volunteers clean up Chagville Beach in Chaguaramas for the 2010 International Coastal Cleanup



The Trinidad Piping Guan (Pawi)

GreeNews, an internal electronic newsletter, is published to inform and engage employees in global environmental events. The e-format of the newsletter minimizes the company's carbon footprint. Employees freely offer suggestions and tips for an environmentally-friendly workplace and tips for the home as well.

Sustainability at Guardian means utilizing the best practices in its operations to prevent negative ecological impact while identifying opportunities to re-invest locally and regionally. One of these opportunities for instance is the company's partnership over the past 5 years with the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) and service on the National Planning Committee (NPC) for the annual the International Coastal Clean-Up. GHJ has also adopted Chagville Beach in Chaguaramas as its sponsored site for the event.

One of the company's most popular awareness initiatives is the independent Wildlife Trust established back in 1992 by Guardian Life of the Caribbean. Its mandate is to support projects that seek to preserve and conserve the rich wildlife heritage of

Trinidad and Tobago. Now known as The Guardian Life Wildlife Fund (GLWF), the Trustees of the GLWF have embarked on the Fund's most ambitious project to date, "Pride in Pawi". This project encourages a dedicated, concerted and community approach to the efforts of protecting the Trinidad Piping Guan or Pawi, *Pipile pipile*, endangered species which is endemic only to Trinidad.

Other sustainable initiatives at Guardian include saving energy by powering down its buildings after a certain hour at night, the introduction of environmentally appropriate cleaning products, the provision and collection of recycling bins at employee activities and sponsorship of a recycling bin around the Queen's Park Savannah. In its continued effort to manage its carbon footprint, Guardian is also greening its annual report process and presented a summary of its financial statements in 2009 and 2010. In this way the company was able to desirably decrease the print run of Annual Reports with the complete notes. The full report is now produced in a much smaller quantity to distribute by individual request, and is also available on the company's website.

LEARNING FROM EXAMPLE



Climate change can really be a confusing issue to understand especially when you're a young person.

I look at television shows on the environment and on climate change but even those leave me asking a lot of questions.

We already know that something isn't right with the environment. We hear on the news that the atmosphere is getting hotter all the time; there's a threat of rising sea levels; the icebergs are melting and hurricanes are getting stronger.

Scary, isn't it?

But we know that countries around the world including mine and yours are trying to put measures in place to avoid more extreme situations and have tried to get their populations to not contribute to the degradation of the environment. What really helped me to understand the current debate about global warming and changes to the environment was a climate change project that my class was given last year.

It meant I had to dig deeper into the issues and translate that into something that is easy for me to understand, write about it and get enough points from my teacher for a passing grade.

But I think the biggest influence in helping me to understand what is going on in the world on the climate change debate is taking example from my own parents.

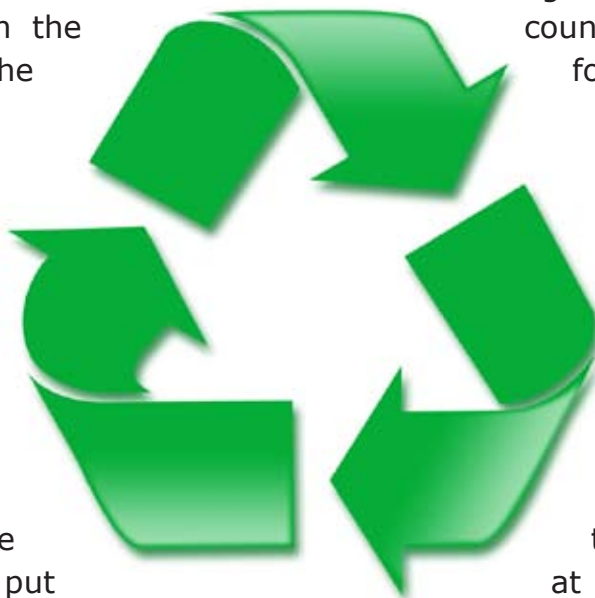
When they go to shop for instance, they read labels to see how far products are coming from. The further away the country, the higher the carbon footprint of that product.

In an earlier column, I wrote about calculating the carbon footprint.

They also don't buy products that come in a lot of plastic wrappers; they prefer to buy drinks in paper carton or bottle instead of plastic; they try to recycle a lot at home, from using the peels from vegetables and fruits for compost which is later mixed with manure for our home-grown vegetables to reusing cans and jars as storage containers or for young plants.

I've also written about how we turn off the lights from rooms that are not in use and even the lights on the computer, the printer and the speakers as they all add up to electricity wastage.

Why not see what your own parents are doing for the environment – and maybe help them take the initiative to start becoming Earth conscious if they haven't as yet.





Forest Facts

IF WE DON'T CONSERVE OUR FORESTS,
ANIMALS LIKE THIS PANDA WILL NOT
HAVE A HOME...

ISN'T HE CUTE?



OAS Conference Highlights “Decisive Opportunities” in Facing Climate Change

There is no better way of taking advantage of the “decisive opportunities” available to the countries of the Americas in facing climate change than the Cancun Agreements, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Christiana Figueres, said during her participation as keynote speaker in a conference on climate change organized by the Organization of American States (OAS) at its headquarters in Washington DC.

At the event held in May, Ms. Figueres said every country has a series of decisive opportunities to face climate change while promoting sustainable development, from the perspective of adaptation as well as from that of mitigation.

“It is important for these opportunities to be fully taken advantage of. And currently there is no better way of taking advantage of them than by implementing the Cancun Agreements,” she said.

The documents signed in the Mexican city in December 2010 by the participating governments in the Sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP 16) contain potentially

beneficial agreements for the countries of the Americas, such as support for the creation and financing of green projects and greenhouse gas emissions mitigation programs in developing countries.

At the meeting titled, “Climate Change: What the Americas Can and Must Do,” the UNFCCC chief asserted that though the Cancun Agreements “unfortunately represent a small step for the planet,” they are nevertheless “a great step for the community of nations,” and that “thanks to these and other opportunities created by the Cancun Agreements we can begin to act speedily against global climate change and thus directly contribute to the national wellbeing” of each country.

She highlighted the importance of significantly increasing the use of renewable energies, which are found in abundance throughout the American continent, for example in the wind conditions in Mexico, in Central America, in northern Colombia and Patagonia; the large areas in Latin America that experience high levels of solar radiation; and the considerable geothermic resources in various volcanic areas.

"If the opportunities for renewable energies are not taken advantage of and supported, the developing countries of the American continent will intensify their capacities for energy production based on fossil fuels as they quickly develop their infrastructure," Secretary Figueres said.

She indicated this would "seal the permanency of infrastructure with a high level of carbon emissions and the natural endowments of renewable energies would be wasted," which would be "detrimental to the sustainable development of each of our countries and, for obvious reasons, to the entire world."

Thus, she made a call to "not allow that opportunity to pass" and support developing countries with adequate policies and provide them incentives like those found in the Cancun Agreements.

In her presentation she also referred to the sustainable use of the forests in the region, to national initiatives centered on identifying the needs of adaptation, and congratulated the efforts of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA), headquartered at the OAS. Finally, she recalled the importance of intergovernmental collaboration on this issue.

"As regards climate change, I dare suggest that in the long term the countries of the continent have more shared interests than points of discord," she said.

"...it is undeniable that the nature itself of climate change is such that no country can face it on its own. The problem can only be solved if all countries face it together."

CURRENT ISSUES IN TOURISM

"The impact of climate change on Caribbean tourism demand".

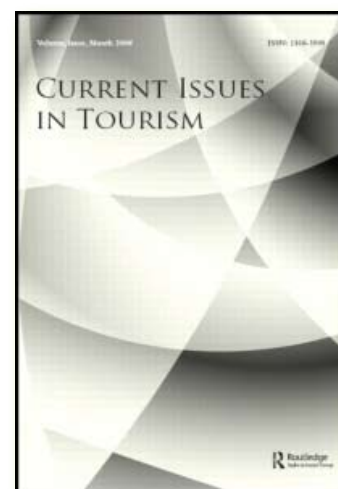
Winston Ricardo Moore

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University of the West Indies, Bridgetown, Barbados

Abstract

Climate change can either positively or negatively impact on the attractiveness of a destination. To evaluate the potential effects of these changes for Caribbean destinations, a cross-country tourism demand model is augmented with relative tourism climatic indices to examine the importance of an island's climatic features. The model is estimated using a dynamic panel approach and monthly observations over the period 1977-2006. Combining the scenarios for future climatic conditions as well as the coefficient estimates obtained, anticipated scenarios of the direct effects of climate change on tourist arrivals to the region are provided. In addition, merging this data with estimates of average visitor expenditure gives a dollar estimate of the impact on the tourism industry and the overall economy.





THE NATIONAL GAS COMPANY
OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED

29,000
seedlings.

That's 29,000 commitments to the

environment.

29,000 more trees for our children's

children to enjoy.

29,000 more subjects for a

painter's canvas. 29,000 more homes for
our wildlife to seek refuge. 29,000



reasons to keep planting.

For Beauty and Beasts

Through our No Net Forest Loss Policy, NGC
replaces hectare for hectare

of forested areas cleared for pipeline
construction. We partner with communities,
governmental and non-governmental
agencies to carry out our

Reforestation Programme

with the aim to restore our
natural forest resources.

29,000 and counting...



First Meeting of Green Climate Fund Transitional Committee Opens

The first meeting of the Transitional Committee for the design of the Green Climate Fund took place in late April in Mexico City, Mexico.

The Committee is composed of seven members from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean respectively, two members from both Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and 15 from developed countries.

In a statement at the opening of the meeting, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Christiana Figueres highlighted the Committee's task "to propose a design that will make the Green Climate Fund the window into a new era of vastly greater financing for climate action in the developing world."

The following is a shortened version of her opening statement to the Committee:

I am pleased to welcome to this initial meeting such a distinguished group of members with the necessary experience and skills, notably in the area of finance and climate change.

Members of the Committee, the task before you is to propose a design that will make the Green Climate Fund the window into a new era of vastly greater financing for climate action in the developing world, and to do so in time for approval in Durban.

In the conduct of its work, the Transitional Committee will make special efforts to encourage input from all Parties and from relevant government and non-governmental organizations and the private sector, who will contribute valuable insights to the design of the Fund.

I therefore am also pleased to welcome here today a wide array of observers to this first meeting of the Transitional Committee.

To get public and private capital flowing freely on the scale required, I believe that the Green Climate Fund will benefit from a robust, transparent and flexible design that first offers developed world governments a trusted avenue to deploy their climate funding to the best effect.

Secondly, offers a clear and compelling route of engagement for private sector capital to partner with, and be leveraged by government funds. And thirdly, can swiftly and transparently deploy these much greater amounts of funding so that both the providers of funds and the recipients are encouraged and incentivized to greater action on both adaptation and mitigation.

I am firmly convinced that as governments, industry and investors see a low-carbon, climate-resilient future is not only necessary, but sustainable and indeed even profitable, the necessary finance will flow faster than many of us now expect.

IDB ANNOUNCES NEW SUSTAINABLE EMERGING CITIES PLATFORM

Inter-American Development Bank President Luis Alberto Moreno has announced a plan to partner with intermediate cities in Latin America and the Caribbean that aspire to set a new standard for sustainable urban development.

The plan would help cities analyze their development challenges in an integrated manner, prioritize investments, and identify funding from national and international sources.

There are more than 140 fast-growing cities in Latin America and the Caribbean with populations between 100,000 and 2 million people. Typically located near agricultural or manufacturing centers, these cities are growing two to three times faster than the region's megacities. At that pace, these cities will double in size in just 20 years. Over three quarters of Latin American and Caribbean citizens already live in urban areas.

"We all know what happened in Latin America when we combined rapid growth with poor planning, lack of financing for infrastructure, and little regard for environmental and climate issues," Mr. Moreno said. "No one wants today's emerging cities to become tomorrow's crowded and unhealthy megacities."

He said the goal of the Sustainable Emerging Cities platform is to help emerging cities avoid the mistakes of the past by crafting comprehensive plans that will harness sustainable solutions to housing, transportation, water and energy use, public services, and related areas.

A key part of the challenge will be adopt fiscal management practices that enable



Luis Alberto Moreno

cities to finance such plans with a combination of local and central government revenues. The platform will also promote citizen participation in decisions about planning and budgets, along with measures to enable communities to monitor the outcome of public investments.

Under the plan, the IDB will initially partner with a small number of emerging cities to develop and test instruments that will subsequently be offered to a larger number of cities in the region. The Bank will offer consulting resources and technical support designed to expedite the process of analysis, diagnosis, prioritization and design of projects in an integrated manner.

Participating cities will be able to capitalize on the IDB's deep expertise in sustainable urban development. Over the past 30 years the Bank has directed billions of dollars to projects in areas such as Bus Rapid Transit, affordable housing, energy efficiency, fiscal reform, water supply, low-income neighborhood improvements, downtown revitalization, municipal governance, and climate change adaptation.

Best practices from these projects will be tailored to the particular needs of emerging cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, contributing to the global movement toward cleaner, less carbon-intensive models for urban development.

"Making smarter use of local resources can help us tackle global problems like climate change, providing lessons that can be applied in emerging cities in other parts of the world," President Moreno said.

Who wants the last slice?



Our planet is the only one we have, and its resources cannot be mindlessly consumed. Let's conserve our earth and make sure there is plenty for future generations to enjoy.



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Fishing for Sustainable Practices to Conserve Fisheries

New analysis highlights need to sustainably manage global fisheries to secure livelihoods and protect ecosystems

Global fish production has reached an all-time high, according to research by Nourishing the Planet (www.NourishingthePlanet.org) for the Worldwatch Institute's Vital Signs Online publication.

Aquaculture, or fish farming—once a minor contributor to total fish harvest—increased 50-fold between the 1950s and 2008 and now contributes nearly half of all fish produced worldwide.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, an estimated 53 percent of fisheries are considered fully exploited—harvested to their maximum sustainable levels—with no room for expansion in production.

Population growth and a higher demand for dietary protein are putting increasing pressure on depleted stocks and threatened ecosystems.



Mainstream approaches to fisheries management have focused narrowly on short-term profit and boosting production.

Worldwatch's analysis states that practices will need to shift to more sustainable strategies to meet demand and support fishing communities.

Increased farming of large predators, such as salmon and tuna, has led to overfishing of prey fish—including anchoveta and herring, which are commonly used as fishmeal.

It generally takes at least three kilograms of feed to produce one kilogram of

salmon. The shrinking of prey species threatens the entire food chain, putting further stress on large predator stocks.

"Even as we depend more on farmed fish, a growing scarcity of fish-feed may jeopardize future expansion of the industry," said Brian Halweil, Worldwatch senior researcher and co-project director of the

Institute's Nourishing the Planet project, a two-year evaluation of agricultural innovations.

This could also negatively affect the economies of developing countries, home to the nearly



In 2007, a group of Gambian women oyster harvesters formed the TRY Women's Oyster Harvesting Association. They have collectively agreed to close one tributary in their oyster territories for an entire year and to shorten their harvest season by two months. These practices may seem difficult in the short run, but they pay off over time, securing incomes and nutrition in their communities.

Worldwatch's Nourishing the Planet project has traveled to 25 countries across sub-Saharan Africa, shining a spotlight on communities that serve as models for a more sustainable future.

The project is unearthing innovations in agriculture that can help alleviate hunger and poverty while also protecting the environment. These innovations are elaborated in the recently released report State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet.

"By focusing on seafood and other often-ignored parts of the food chain, such efforts can help improve livelihoods and protect the ecosystems on which millions of people worldwide depend," said Nierenberg.

60 percent of the world's fishers that are classified as small-scale commercial or subsistence fishers.

In Africa, an estimated 100 million people depend on fish from inland sources, such as lakes and rivers, for income as well as protein and much-needed micronutrients like vitamin A, calcium, iron, and zinc.

But coastal fisheries across West Africa have declined by up to 50 percent in the last 30 years due to significant pressure from large industrial fleets. Fisheries also provide important ecosystem services, such as storing and recycling nutrients and absorbing pollutants.

"Fish farmers and the food industry will need to make ecological restoration

as much a goal as meeting the growing demand for seafood," said Danielle Nierenberg, Nourishing the Planet co-project director.

Negotiations are currently under way at the World Trade Organization to establish new rules on fisheries subsidies that would eliminate unfair and environmentally destructive policies while ensuring a level playing-field and abundant resources for all fishers.

But top-down fisheries management has had limited success in the past. In contrast, fisheries co-managed by local authorities and fishers themselves have emerged as a promising solution to replenishing depleting fish stocks.

Caribbean Updates



...supporting a sustainable Caribbean environment



Eric Carey stands in a press conference with expedition partners from the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, which will be in The Bahamas for the next year mapping out the Coral Reef network. Pictured from left to right are Capt. Phillip Renault, Living Oceans executive director; Eric Carey, BNT executive director, and Dr. Andy Bruckner, Living Oceans Chief Scientist (BIS Photo / Gena Gibbs).

Living Oceans Foundation's coral reef project launched in the Bahamas

Ocean pollution is threatening to deplete the commercial fisheries stock in the coral reefs of The Bahamas and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) around the world. The Living Oceans Foundation has chosen The Bahamas to launch their research project that examines the coral reef systems of 25 island countries worldwide.

"We are extremely pleased and we feel privileged that the Living Oceans Foundation has selected The Bahamas as

the country to start this five-year incredible exploration to determine the state of the world's coral reefs," said Eric Carey, executive director of the Bahamas National Trust.

"This is an incredible opportunity to be a part of. The world's coral reefs are extremely important globally, but nationally whether you're talking from the perspective of people diving and having an experience of contributing millions of dollars to our economy, or a fisherman who benefits from the ecological benefits that coral reefs provide, or people who benefit from the buffer from storms that fringing reefs provide

to our coast, Coral reefs are extremely important to The Bahamas", he said.

The scientific research group announced its plans for the next five years to travel around the world to study the damage of ocean pollution. The results are expected to reveal global solutions that encourage responsibility to keep the oceans clean because it is the source of the world's food supply.

The contamination of coral reefs are killing the living coral and endangering the various species of marine animals that live and are protected there.

Planners unite to address the challenge of climate change in Portland Bight

About 30 planners from a variety of agencies met recently to develop plans for addressing how climate change will affect the protected area of Portland Bight in Jamaica.

"Climate change is a serious threat to development, livelihoods, the environment and human health in Portland Bight – and participatory planning is essential if we are going to minimize its impacts," said Ingrid Parchment, Executive Director of the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM).

The 30 planners included central government agencies, parish councils, Non-Government Organisations, climate change experts from the University of the West Indies, community members, representatives from the Parish Development Committees and funding agencies.

The workshop entitled "Climate change adaptation planning workshop for Portland Bight Fish Sanctuaries and Protected Area" was hosted funded by the United Nations Development Programme and Panos Caribbean, with

additional support from Forestry Department.

"Climate change is happening now. We must acknowledge it is happening, assess how it is affecting us and take action to address it," said Dr. Michael Taylor of the Physics Department, University of the West Indies, in his keynote address.

Dr. Ann Sutton, a consultant with C-CAM, described the importance of Portland Bight's environment and the free services it provides.

"The forests, wetlands, coral reefs, seagrass beds, and the fish and wildlife that inhabit them have a huge actual and potential value in their natural state," she said while adding that the free services they provide were valued at US\$2 million/year in 2000.

Portland Bight is one of the most vulnerable places in the island to hurricanes, floods, storm surge, and sea level rise. Its complex ecosystems provide habitat for a wide range of Jamaican wildlife.

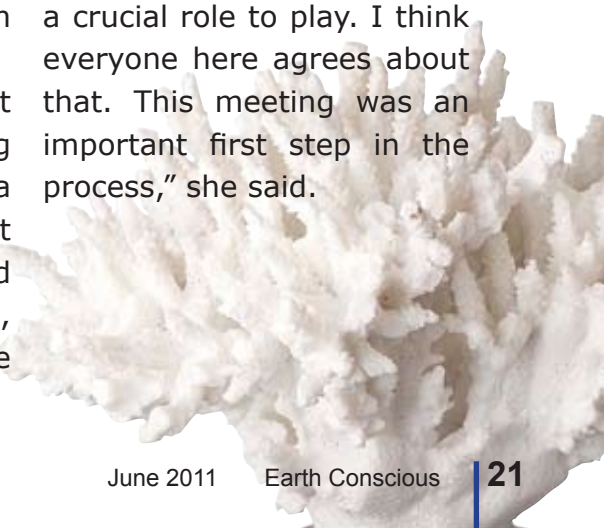
On the coastline, it has the largest remaining mangrove system in Jamaica (Galleon Harbour, West Harbour, the Goat Islands and almost all areas between), which, together with extensive

sea-grass beds, sandy and muddy areas and coral reefs, provide the largest nursery area for fish, crustaceans and molluscs on the island.

Brandon Hay, Science Officer for C-CAM, pointed out that many proposed new developments – including housing and heavy industry – in the flood plains and along the coast will be vulnerable to natural disasters and, by destroying the natural protection such as mangroves and reefs, will make the communities more vulnerable.

Parchment supported his point by adding that the purpose of this workshop was to bring stakeholders together to ensure that decisions about development are made on the best available information.

"We have identified that there is an urgent need to document climate change, increase awareness, take action and coordinate initiatives around climate change, and planners have a crucial role to play. I think everyone here agrees about that. This meeting was an important first step in the process," she said.





SCSCB Meeting 2011

Home

18th Regional Meeting of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
21 - 25 July 2011
Pelican Bay Hotel
Freeport, Grand Bahama

We cordially invite you to attend the SCSCB's 18th regional meeting in the beautiful island of Grand Bahama, from Thursday, July 21 to Monday, July 25, 2011 (inclusive). The meeting will be held at the charming Pelican Bay Hotel. Our local host is the **Bahamas National Trust**.

The theme of the meeting is **Connecting with Nature Through Birds**. Many sessions and training workshops will focus on aspects of this theme, that is, finding ways to engage a larger and more diverse constituency more effectively by inspiring interest in nature, and encouraging people to recognize and utilize the economic values of birds and habitats. Ultimately, we hope to help build the capacity of our members and partners to develop a conservation ethic in local people and increase their commitment to and involvement in conservation action. This theme is strongly linked to work that was initiated at the 2009 meeting in Antigua on sustainable bird and nature tourism and that will be continued at this meeting as well (through a workshop to develop SCSCB's Caribbean Birding Trail).

46
days until
SCSCB Meeting 2011

SCSCB

Learn more about the SCSCB at our home page: www.scsqb.org

Call for papers - open until 27 May 2011

Subpages (11): Birding the Bahamas, Call for Papers, Family Fun, Field Trips, Hotel, Program, Registration, Silent Auction, Sponsors, Travel Logistics, Travel Support

<https://sites.google.com/site/scscbmeeting2011/home>

'Connecting with Nature through Birds' to be held in Grand Bahama

More than 150 people from 30 countries will visit Grand Bahama in July to participate in the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds' (SCSCB) 18th regional meeting under the theme "Connecting with Nature through Birds."

Delegates are expected to include natural resource managers, educators and scientists from all the Caribbean islands and other regions who all have an interest in Caribbean birds or migratory birds who winter in the Caribbean and their conservation.

There are reportedly more than 560 species of birds in the Caribbean region and about 72 percent of the

approximately 208 resident island birds are found only in this region.

Hundreds of migratory bird species also spend winters in the forests and wetlands of the region, or use them as a refueling stop on the way to Latin America.

President of the SCSCB Dr. Lisa Sorenson notes that a better job must be done in educating the public about the value of these birds in order to ensure their conservation.

"Not enough people know about or appreciate them, and as a result, many species are threatened with extinction—victims of habitat loss, predation by introduced species like raccoons, rats, feral cats and dogs or unregulated hunting," said Ms. Sorenson.

During this year's conference, there will be presentations and workshops

by internationally renowned experts in bird education and sustainable bird and nature tourism.

"These experts will share diverse strategies for engaging a larger and more diverse constituency more effectively by inspiring interest in nature and encouraging people to recognize and utilize the economic values of birds and habitats," according to a press release from the organisers.

One of the keynote speakers is John Robinson, an ornithologist, environmental consultant and advocate for minorities in birdwatching and nature.

He will share his work over the last 12 years on how to connect youth and young adults to nature through the magic of bird watching.

Global Climate Change Alliance in Belize City

A two-day meeting of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) which took place recently in Belize City, Belize was attended by about 50 high-level officials and ministers from Caribbean countries and international and regional development partners.

The two-day meeting was hosted by the Government of Belize and was organised by the European Commission in close collaboration with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre.

Discussions and exchange of views focussed on progress in practical cooperation on climate change. The conference discussed and assessed the Draft Implementation Plan for the CARICOM Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change.

The Conference examined the positive results from the Cancun climate conference and the steps towards the Durban Conference at the end of 2011 in order to progress towards a sound post-2012 climate regime. There were discussions on adaptation and climate resilient/compatible development and



on low emission development strategies, including REDD+ and links between climate, agriculture, and energy.

There were exchange of views on existing climate change financing mechanisms, opportunities and difficulties to fund actions tackling climate change.

The Conference affirmed its intent to advance understanding towards a common vision on future climate regime and discussed regional needs in relation to climate change.

The meeting also heard about good progress in mangrove restoration in Guyana using GCCA support.

Mangrove forests provide protection against

coastal erosion and flooding, while preserving biodiversity and providing carbon storage. Delegates observed the potential for replication in other parts of the region.

GCCA support to Jamaica is focussed on watershed restoration and protection through reforestation. This helps to conserve top soil and prevents it washing into coastal waters, affecting coral reefs and fisheries.

Support in Belize is due to begin in June and will be focussed on increasing resilience in the water sector and enhancing capacity of the Government in matters of climate change.

POTENTIAL OF RENEWABLE ENERGY OUTLINED

Close to 80 percent of the world's energy supply could be met by renewables by mid-century if backed by the right enabling public policies, a new report shows.

The findings, from over 120 researchers working with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), also indicate that the rising penetration of renewable energies could lead to cumulative greenhouse gas savings equivalent to 220 to 560 Gigatonnes of carbon dioxide (GtCO₂eq) between 2010 and 2050.

The upper end of the scenarios assessed, representing a cut of around a third in greenhouse gas emissions from business-as-usual projections, could assist in keeping concentrations of greenhouse gases at 450 parts per million.

This could contribute towards a goal of holding the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius - an aim recognized in the United Nations Climate Convention's Cancun Agreements.

The findings, launched in May after being approved by member countries of the IPCC in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, are contained in a summary for policymakers of the Special Report on Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation (SRREN).

The summary is a short version of a roughly a thousand page comprehensive assessment compiled by over 120 leading experts from all over the world for IPCC's Working Group III.

"With consistent climate and energy policy support, renewable energy sources can contribute substantially to human well-being by sustainably supplying energy and stabilizing the climate," said Professor Ottmar Edenhofer, Co-Chair of Working Group III at the report's launch. "However, the substantial increase of renewables is technically and politically very challenging he added.

Youba Sokona, the Co-Chair of the Working Group III, said: "The potential role of renewable energy technologies in meeting the needs of the poor and in powering the sustainable growth of developing and developed economies can trigger sharply polarized views. This IPCC report has brought some much needed clarity to this debate in order to inform governments on the options and decisions that will be needed if the world is to collectively realize a low carbon, far more resource efficient and equitable development path."

Ramon Pichs, Co-Chair of the Working Group III, added: "The report shows that it is not the availability of the resource, but the public policies that will either expand or constrain renewable energy development over the coming decades. Developing countries have an important stake in this future - this is where most of the 1.4 billion people without access to electricity live yet also where some of the best conditions exist for renewable energy deployment."

Also speaking at the launch, Rajendra Pachauri, Chairman of the IPCC, said: "The IPCC brought together the most relevant and best available information to provide the world with this scientific assessment of the potential of renewable energy sources to mitigate climate change. The Special Report can serve as a sound knowledge basis for policymakers to take on this major challenge of the 21st century."

Initiative Launched to prepare the way for REDD+ Laws

Senior legislators from four key forested developing countries met to launch the GLOBE Legislator Forest Initiative to develop complementary legislation to prepare the way for efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD).

The Global Legislators Organisation (GLOBE), which is coordinating the initiative with senior legislators from Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia and Mexico, is supported by the UN-REDD Programme, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

The participating legislators made commitments to strengthen the role of their parliaments in creating effective, efficient and equitable laws for REDD. These pledges marked the launch of this new GLOBE initiative, which aims to strengthen legislation and parliamentary scrutiny functions in support of national REDD strategies.

Brazilian Senator Rodrigo Rollemberg, said; "As Chair of the Brazilian Senate Environment Committee I will be considering the amendments to the Forest Code and advancing legislation on REDD. Participating in the GLOBE Legislator Forest Initiative will enable me to understand how legislation in other countries is being developed, introduced and implemented to address challenges that are common to all our countries. These lessons will have a strong impact on my own deliberations in Brazil."

Mexican Deputy José Ignacio Pichardo Lechuga, Chair of the Special Commission on Forests in the Mexican Congress, said: "To date Mexico's national REDD strategy has been developed without the involvement of the Mexican Congress.

As legislators, we fully support the government's objective of achieving zero emissions from deforestation by 2020. However, in order for this ambitious goal to be achieved, it will be essential to engage legislators in this process. The GLOBE Legislator Forest Initiative will strengthen our capacity to advance legislation and scrutinize the budget in support of national REDD strategies."





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MICRONESIA'S LEGAL CHALLENGE TO EMISSIONS

The Pacific island state of Micronesia has begun a legal challenge to plans to expand a coal-fired power plant in the Czech Republic, 3,700 miles away.

Low-lying Micronesia is at risk from rising sea levels and claims potential environmental damage from greenhouse gas emissions and resultant global warming threatens the archipelago's survival.

Experts in international law said the case could set a new precedent as countries more at risk from climate change take action against major carbon emitting countries.

If the expansion of the Prunerov II plant goes forward, it will become one of Europe's largest coal-fired power stations and the largest single source of carbon dioxide emissions in the Czech Republic.

The 600 islands of the Micronesia chain in the western Pacific already suffer regular flooding, extreme weather events and destructive tidal surges as a result of rising sea levels and the warming oceans, its government says.

AFRICAN LEADERS PLEDGE TO "SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE" AT DURBAN CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS

At the World Economic Forum on Africa, the leaders of South Africa, Gabon and Kenya pledged to work together and take a united stance at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban, South Africa, in November.

"The question for us leaders is how committed we are to be a little less selfish and to think of the community as a whole," said Gabon's President Ali Bongo Ondimba, in a session on the second day of the recent meeting. "It is important for us as Africans to get together. We will be determined to speak with one voice."

COP 17 will aim to shape a legally binding agreement on global warming to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which is set to end next year.

"There are parts of the world where the challenge [of climate change] is very severe," explained South African President Jacob G. Zuma. "For some, it is a question of life or death. The question that faces all of us is how we respond: Are we ready to have a legally binding agreement that would try to accommodate all of us?"

Failure at Durban is not an option, warned Raila Amolo Odinga, Prime Minister of Kenya. Rising food and energy prices due in part to climate conditions are adding to the urgency. "There is a need to act now; there is no need to wait," Odinga declared.

ACTION NEEDED TO MANAGE CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS



Warning that the risk of dangerous climate change impacts is growing with every ton of greenhouse gases emitted

into the atmosphere, a National Research Council committee reiterated the pressing need for substantial action to limit the magnitude of climate change and to prepare to adapt to its impacts.

The nation's options for responding to the risks posed by climate change are analyzed in a new report the final volume in America's Climate Choices, a series of studies requested by Congress.

The committee that authored the report included not only renowned scientists and engineers but also economists, business leaders, an ex-governor, a former

congressman, and other policy experts.

"The goal of the America's Climate Choices studies is to ensure that climate decisions are informed by the best possible scientific knowledge, analysis, and advice, both now and in the future," said committee chair Albert Carnesale, chancellor emeritus and professor, University of California, Los Angeles.

The new report reaffirms that the preponderance of scientific evidence points to human activities - especially the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere - as the most likely cause for most of the global warming that has occurred over the last several decades.

This trend cannot be explained by natural factors such as internal climate variability or changes in incoming energy from the sun. The report adds that the impacts of climate change on human and natural systems can generally be expected to intensify with warming.

IEA Meeting Outlines Plans for Report on Improving Energy Access Financing

The International Energy Agency (IEA) organized a meeting of 60 energy access experts to begin preparations for a special section titled "Energy for all: financing access to the poor," to be included in the IEA's "World Energy Outlook 2011."

At the expert meeting, Fatih Birol, IEA Chief Economist, underlined the need for US\$36 billion per year to bring modern energy services to the world's poor, noting that this number is currently "far from being reached." Birol stressed that, although IEA estimates that over 20% of the world's population currently lacks access to electricity, reducing this percentage to zero would increase global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by only 1%.

The main aim of the special section on "Energy for all: financing access to the poor" will be to evaluate available and potential sources of financing to reduce energy poverty, as well as to outline a "new architecture for financing universal modern energy access." The results will be presented at a high-level conference hosted by the Government of Norway in Oslo from 10-11 October 2011.

In particular, the report will investigate: scaling-up successful financing options already adopted in developing countries; gaps in governmental and non-governmental financing; the current role of private finance and how to create a more enabling environment for increased private financial activity on energy poverty; and how to combine the knowledge gained through these analyses into a new financial architecture aimed at achieving universal energy access.



EU Ministers Discuss Next Steps in International Climate Finance

The European Council of Economic and Financial Affairs adopted conclusions on key issues and next steps in international climate finance, including the endorsement of an updated final report on fast-start finance provided in 2010.

It emphasized that the EU and its member States have mobilized EUR2.34 billion in 2010 as part of a broader commitment to provide EUR7.2 billion cumulatively over the period 2010-12.

In its conclusions, the Council underscores that it will be “challenging but feasible to meet the commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilizing US\$100 billion per year by 2020, in the context of meaningful mitigation action and transparency on implementation to enable and support enhanced action on mitigation.”

It includes substantial finance to REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, as well as conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of carbon stocks)-plus), adaptation, technology development and transfer, and capacity building.

It also highlights the need to identify a path for scaling up climate funding from 2013 to 2020, depending on climate actions taken in developing countries and progress in the international negotiations.



ADB Invests in Three Climate Change Technology Venture Capital Funds

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is investing US\$60 million to help set up three venture capital funds dedicated to nurturing new climate change technologies. The funds will primarily target the markets of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and India, which are actively promoting clean energy and sustainable technologies.

“Climate change will hit Asia hard in coming decades. Investing in these venture capital funds will help channel finance into innovative and affordable technologies that tackle the challenge of climate change in ways that are suited to developing Asia,” said Philip Erquiaga, Director General of ADB's Private Sector Operations Department.

ADB is injecting US\$20 million each into the three funds - Aloe Environment Fund III, Keytone Ventures II, and VenturEast Life Fund III - that should leverage an additional US\$600 million-US\$700 million private sector investment into the funds.

The funds will, in turn, invest in early-stage technology companies that address climate change mitigation and adaptation or environmental protection, also known as climatech. Early-stage companies are new firms which have not yet reached annual profitability.

Mitigation costs in developing countries are predicted to grow to over US\$100 billion per year by 2030, depending on the scale of long-term greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Adaptation cost estimates for Asia and the Pacific are in the order of US\$40 billion per year between now and 2050. The 2007 Bali Action Plan, the Copenhagen Accord, and subsequent climate change agreements have all identified technology innovation and transfer as key to tackling climate change.

A close-up photograph of an orangutan with reddish-brown fur, looking off to the side while holding a green branch. The background is a dense, sunlit forest with green leaves and tree trunks.

Forest Facts

THE WORD “ORANGUTAN” COMES FROM THE MALAY WORDS “ORANG” (MAN) AND “(H)UTAN” (FOREST); HENCE, “MAN OF THE FOREST”.

Orangutans are the only exclusively Asian genus of extant great ape. The largest living arboreal animals, they have longer arms than the other, more terrestrial, great apes. They are among the most intelligent primates and use a variety of sophisticated tools, also making sleeping nests each night from branches and foliage. Their hair is typically reddish-brown, instead of the brown or black hair typical of other great apes.

RISHIKESH: TOWN OF TEMPLES, YOGA AND MEDITATION



By Bogusia Sipiora

Rishikesh is all about Ganga, the river-goddess who descended to the Earth through the lock of hair of God Shiva to make the whole Earth pious, fertile and wash out the sins of humans. Literally meaning 'the place of sages' the town is a celebrated place and home for thousands of rishis, yogis, babas and all those looking for enlightenment.

There is a place where Lord Vishnu crushed the demon Madhu and another site where Lord Shiva drank the poison that came out during the churning of the ocean.

Every day thousands of people from distant areas come to Rishikesh to take the holy bath in the Ganga river. For many of them it is a pilgrimage of life which must be taken at least once. It is said that water from the Ganga washes away one's sins. It

is believed that any water that mixes with even the smallest amount of Ganga water becomes holy with healing powers.

Rishikesh has also become world known as Town of Temples, Yoga and Meditation. Actually the whole town is considered to be sacred as it is believed that meditation at this place leads to attainment of salvation.

There are many temples and ashrams along the river Ganga where the Hindu spirituality and philosophy have its place. And it is a special place for the Western world as well, which is forever blown away with its unique charm. It is said that the town came into limelight after The Beatles dropped by for a famous visit to one of ashrams and took part in meditation classes.

Apart from the pilgrimage centre for all kinds of believers this rather small town



is scenically located where the Ganga River comes down from the Himalayas. By law it is a vegetarian city and an alcohol-free city! Also use of plastics bags by shopkeepers and vendors has been banned there.

Evenings in Rishikesh are for sitting by the Ganga and while away time. There are also white sand beaches, where people try to find some quiet spots. But what a challenge!

Even when you think you found a secluded spot, out of nowhere comes an "arti diya" seller chasing and trying to multiply the price of his product. Arti is a ritual of worshipping the Ganga with bhajans (holy songs) and diya is an earthen candle used during the prayer.

In Rishikesh arti is a daily evening affair, very picturesque and appealing to a lot of people. Some of them immerse themselves in the bhajans together with the

monks and young students of the nearby Sanskrit school.

Rishikesh attracts people from all over the world who come and often stay here. There are a lot of foreigners who are not interested in sightseeing but rather in practising yoga and meditation. They wear simple Indian clothes and significant jewellery, looking as if they were and felt at home. They come here not for holiday but for the peace of mind, *looking for the way*.

Bogusia is a Polish native who now makes her home in New Delhi, India.



Beautiful Bangkok

Photos by: Afra Maria Schoenmaker Balazina



Afra Maria Schoenmaker Balazina is a journalist based in São Paulo (Brazil) who specializes in Environment and Science issues. She works for a newspaper called O Estado de S. Paulo (www.estadao.com.br) and has a daily section called Planeta (or Planet).

Afra also has a blog: <http://blogs.estadao.com.br/afra-balazina/>



It was her second time in Bangkok. “Both times I went there to cover the UNFCCC meeting about climate change. But the first time I didn’t enjoy much because I was sick. And this time I had the opportunity to walk more in the city and go to the touristic places,” said Afra.





Growing Demand for Food, Combating Hunger & Malnutrition

food prices and reducing progress on food security and childhood malnutrition.

"Although the threats to food and nutrition security are very real, these outcomes are by no means inevitable," said Mr. Rosegrant. "The myriad challenges underscore the importance of agricultural research, better policies, new technologies, and social investments to feeding the world's burgeoning population while protecting critical natural resources."

According to IFPRI's sophisticated computer model, developed by Mr. Rosegrant, with US\$7 billion of additional annual investments in research to improve crop and livestock productivity, nearly 25 million less children in developing countries would be malnourished in 2050 compared to a business-as-usual scenario.

If projected business-as-usual investments in agricultural research are increased along with greater spending on irrigation, rural roads, safe drinking water, and girls' education, for a total additional increase of US\$22 billion per year, the number of malnourished children in the developing world—currently projected to be 103 million in 2050—would drop substantially to 45 million.

Global demand for major grains, such as maize, rice, and wheat, is projected to increase by nearly 48 percent from 2000-2025 and by 70 percent between 2000 and 2050.

Per capita meat consumption will also increase in many developing regions of the world and it will more than double in Sub-Saharan Africa from 2000-2050, leading to a doubling of total meat consumption by 2050, according to research presented by Mark Rosegrant, who delivered the Ag Economic Forum Keynote during the 2011 Ag Innovation Showcase held in late May in St. Louis in the United States.

At the same time, the growth in production of staple foods is expected to decline significantly in most of the world if business continues as usual.

Mr. Rosegrant is director of Environment and Production Technology at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

"Climate change, high and volatile food and energy prices, population and income growth, changing diets, and increased urbanization will put intense pressure on land and water and challenge global food security as never before," he said. "If agricultural production and policymaking continues down its present course, there could be severe consequences for many poor people in developing countries."

Using state-of-the-art economic modeling based on alternative future scenarios for agricultural supply and demand that take into account the potential harmful impact of climate change, IFPRI projects crop yields, food prices, and child malnutrition through 2050 and beyond. Even without climate change, the prices of rice, maize, and wheat are projected to increase by 25 percent, 48 percent, and 75 percent, respectively, by 2050, in a business-as-usual scenario. Climate change will further slow productivity growth, increasing staple

FIRST WORKSHOP HELD TO REDUCE CO2 EMISSIONS FROM AVIATION



The first in a series of regional training workshops to assist ICAO Member States in producing national action plans for reducing CO2 emissions from international civil aviation took place in Mexico City, Mexico in May.

"ICAO environmental action plans will help States identify the most appropriate measures to reduce emissions from international aviation. They will also allow ICAO to monitor progress by States in achieving global aspirational goals and help address specific needs through more targeted technical and financial assistance," said the Organization's Council President Roberto Kobeh González.

The plans, to be submitted to ICAO by June 2012, result from an agreement reached at the 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly which made international aviation the first sector with global aspirational goals of stabilizing CO2 emissions at 2020 levels and achieving a 2 per cent annual increase in fuel efficiency up to 2050.

The Organization has prepared a comprehensive programme to assist States in developing their action plans, which includes guidance material, a web-based template for the submission of action plans, and workshops to provide information and

training in the preparation of action plans.

"The workshops provide an opportunity for the exchange of views and experiences in order to help States formulate policies and measures that are in line with differing realities," commented Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights.

"ICAO is without a doubt an organization at the forefront of the global fight for the reduction of international aviation emissions. This was demonstrated when it proposed at its 37th Assembly the creation of a global plan of action on climate change based on national plans," added Felipe Duarte Olvera, Undersecretary of Transport.

Hosted by the government of Mexico, the workshop was attended by representatives from North, Central and South America and the Caribbean States nominated by their governments to act as focal points in the development of their respective State action plans.

Other stakeholders such as regional civil aviation organizations, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Air Transport Association, Airports Council International and the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation also contributed to the workshop.



RAIN Forest Facts

THEY ALL LIVE HERE





The weather where you live is not the global climate

Garfield King

In the U.K. earlier this year, with some of the heaviest snow storms for decades, certain newspapers carried front page photographs of cars half buried in snow with headlines such as "Global Warming?... I wish." In the U.S., with record freezing conditions affecting a number of states, some media argued that this was proof there's no global warming taking place.

I wonder if the people who wrote these stories are aware that where they live is not the whole globe. And perhaps more importantly, that climate and weather are not the same thing? As comedian Marcus Brigstocke succinctly put it on the BBC's Now Show, "The weather where you live is not the global climate. The temperature is not the same the world over."

According to NASA "The difference between weather and climate is a measure of time. Weather refers to conditions of the atmosphere over a short period of time. Climate is how the atmosphere "behaves" over relatively long periods of time."

"When we talk about climate change, we talk about changes in long-term averages of daily weather. Climate is the description of the long-term pattern of weather in a particular area." http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/noaa-n/climate/climate_weather.html

Certainly in the Caribbean we hear many people these days complain about the unusual heat. In some Caribbean nations the rainy seasons see more rainfall than usual, while in other parts of the region the dry season has resulted in droughts. Something is going on.

During a three day training workshop on Agricultural Journalism in the Caribbean, held at the Trinidad Hilton in April 2011, Science Advisor at the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre in Belize, Dr. Neville Trotz, revealed that rough projections indicate we are going to have a warmer and drier Caribbean. He also warned that water was going to be a critical issue in the region. Not just scarcity of water, but in some areas it could be an excess of water. Managing these changes is going to be an increasing challenge.

Dr. Trotz says much more insidious changes being observed are the changing weather patterns. While the jury is still out on the frequency of hurricanes, he noted that the models are showing the Caribbean is likely to get more intense hurricanes with more rainfall.

Similar findings and predications are being made in the United States. Michael Mann, the director of the Penn State Earth System Science Centre says, "Warmer air in



the atmosphere can hold more moisture and the condensation of that moisture puts more energy into storm systems.” This could mean more monster winter storms. <http://www.livescience.com/11703-climate-change-expect-monster-winter-storms.html>

I sometimes hear intelligent people say “Climate is always changing so what’s the big deal? Those climate scientists are just trying to scare us.”

Those who thrive on conspiracies point to ClimateGate in 2009, the leaking of thousands of e-mails and documents from the University Of East Anglia (UEA) Climate Research Institute in the U.K. The affair was fuel for climate change skeptics who claimed the leaked documents indicated that data conflicting with global warming ideas had been covered up.

While there was wall to wall media coverage of “ClimateGate” and the investigations into the leaks, there was far less exposure in January 2011 of the findings of the U.K. House of Commons Science and Technology Committee.

The committee reviewed two inquiries set up to look into the matter. One by the UAE: the Independent Climate Change E-mails Review (ICCER) and the independent Scientific Appraisal Panel (SAP). Those investigations cleared researchers involved

with the e-mails of scientific misconduct and found no evidence of a cover-up.

The U.K. Parliamentary Committee had some reservations about the two previous investigations, but did not find anything to challenge the prevailing view of human-induced global warming. “While we have some reservations about the reviews which UEA commissioned, the key point is that they have made a number of constructive recommendations,” the report concluded. “In our view it is time to make the changes and improvements recommended and with greater openness and transparency move on.” <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/news/110125-report-published---uea/>

In the last two years there have been several reviews of climate science which all concluded “that recent controversies had done nothing to challenge the prevailing view of human-induced climate change.” <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-12269493>

If that isn’t enough to get the skeptics wondering whether it may be time to have another look, consider this from the U.K. Guardian on May 29th 2011: “Greenhouse gas emissions increased by a record amount last year, to the highest carbon output in

history, putting hopes of holding global warming to safe levels all but out of reach, according to unpublished estimates from the International Energy Agency.” <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/may/29/carbon-emissions-nuclearpower>

The article goes on to quote Fatih Birol, Chief Economist of the IEA as saying, “Such warming would disrupt the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people across the planet... That is a risk any sane person would seek to drastically reduce.”

Offering a ray of hope Mr. Birol noted that disaster could yet be averted, if governments heed the warning and take “bold, decisive and urgent action, very soon.”

Global warming or Climate Change? I guess we are free to call it what we want, but even if you have a habit of burying your head in the sand, or live in a cave or under a rock, you would be hard pressed not to have noticed that something in the atmosphere is changing. When change is indicated it is usually prudent to consider adaptation.

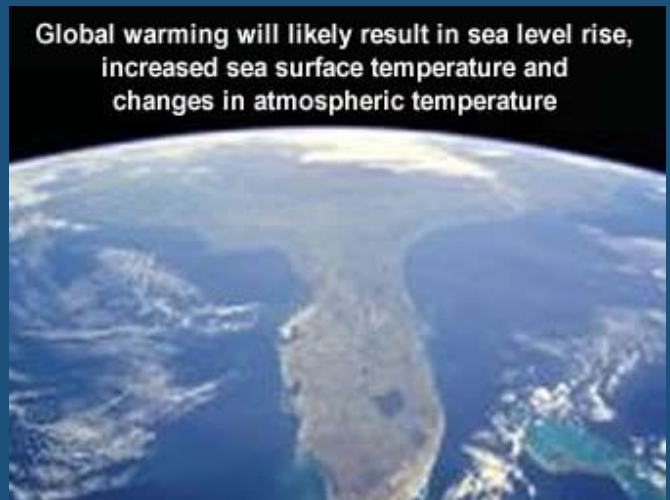
We can continue to doubt the data and ignore the researchers from around the globe, but even if only half of what they say is accurate, we are in for a very bumpy ride. It would not be out of place to accelerate strategies for reducing the long-term effects of what has already started to impact our lives.

Did YOU Know?

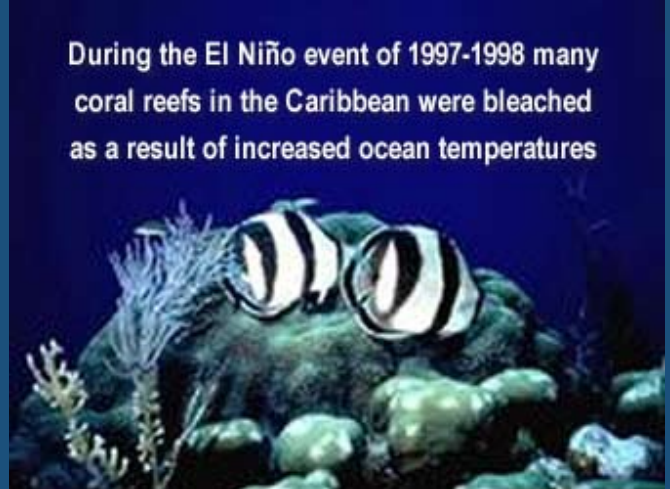
Vulnerability to climate change can be reduced by adapting to it's potential impacts



Global warming will likely result in sea level rise, increased sea surface temperature and changes in atmospheric temperature



During the El Niño event of 1997-1998 many coral reefs in the Caribbean were bleached as a result of increased ocean temperatures





Recycle.
What don't we understand?
It's actually quite simple.





Support for proposed Global Framework on Climate Services

Climate services save countless lives and livelihoods every day, but often do not reach countries and communities which are most vulnerable to climate change. The international community needs to go the "last mile" and make a minimal commitment of US\$75 million per year to unleash the full potential of billions of dollars already invested and spread the benefits around the world, the World Meteorological Congress heard.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Bangladesh Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina, and Ministers who addressed a High-level segment of WMO's quadrennial meeting were united in their calls for Congress to endorse the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) during its three-week session which sets WMO priorities and budget.

"Greenhouse gas emissions are accelerating. Climate change is altering the geopolitical landscape and threatens economies around the world," Mr Ban Ki-moon stated in a special message .

"The World Meteorological Organization and its network of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in 189 countries are critical to meeting the climate challenge. The Global Framework for Climate Services, established by the Third World Climate Conference, is also vital. We must work together to assist the poorest and most vulnerable countries adapt to the inevitable impacts."

The proposed Framework would effectively close the gaps in the provision of existing information and services and would make them available to around 70 developing

"Greenhouse gas emissions are accelerating. Climate change is altering the geopolitical landscape and threatens economies around the world,"

countries which have little or no such climate information. It would provide tailor-made information systems which are accurate, reliable and relevant.

"We need to get climate predictions and services to those who need them most. We need to go the last mile," said Mr Jan Egeland, co-chairman of a High-level Taskforce which proposed the establishment of the Framework.

Mr Egeland and Co-chairman Mr Mahmoud Abu Zeid presented their report to a high-level segment at the WMO's Congress. The Taskforce report said priority would be given to capacity building in Least Developed Countries. The Framework should strengthen and consolidate, not duplicate.

"Many of those in science who know a lot of what climate variability and change will bring do not really know what the needs are of the users in sectors like health, water, agriculture and disaster risk reduction. The users do not know what is available," said Mr. Egeland. "We need to connect the two better."

More than US \$72 million of the annual target investment in the Framework would be allocated to programmes in developing countries, with just US \$3 million on administrative structures. Billions of dollars have been invested in science in satellites, in global prediction models, in super computer models.

"We need that last mile of investment to reach the most vulnerable of societies," said Mr. Egeland.

Swiss President Ms Micheline Calmy-Rey said the Framework "would make it possible for the poorest countries to benefit from modern climate services and obtain assistance from others."

The World Meteorological Organization is the United Nations System's authoritative voice on Weather, Climate and Water.



Family Values



I HAVE BEEN BLESSED TO BE IMMersed IN POSITIVITY OVER THE LAST MONTH. A WELCOME CHANGE FROM MY DESPAIR OF RECENT TIMES. I am in the process of completing an online course in Appreciative Inquiry (AI), led by one of the originators of the process, David Cooperrider. One of the participants, Miles Kotay, describes AI as:

"A means for developing a positive image of the future and figuring out what changes should be made to get there. It focuses on an organization's core strengths. Through the use of powerful, strategic questions, the focus is on what you wish to accomplish rather than what you wish to avoid.

It is a method of strategic inquiry that uses powerful questions to create a conversation based on looking forward with curiosity and reflecting back on the best of what is. AI fosters the emergence of a shared, guiding image of a positive future, and helps identify courses of action to get there."

In case you are wondering how this relates to parenting, well a family is a small organization i.e. "a group of people identified by shared interests or purpose" (Encarta). A family has leaders: managers, perhaps a CEO. A family is required to provide services that make an income – preferably including profits to cover its costs and provide for

future requirements. It has overhead costs, manpower costs, requires supplies and so on.

What has struck me as I observe the parallels between business and family functioning, is that in the world of business there has long been an emphasis on identifying problems and weaknesses, looking at what is not working properly and who is not good enough and putting energy into fixing and correcting. In the same way, for many, parenting life has been largely directed towards finding the flaws in our children and trying to fix them.

A girl is good at drawing, she loves it and is sketching away at every opportunity. However, she is not so good at maths and she hates it. What do we do? What does the education system do? We make the child spend more time trying to get better at math and discourage or stop the drawing that we can see no use for.

Or, think of the young athlete who has to miss practise or the game because he hasn't done well enough in Language Arts. This mindset often creates young people who have been deprived of opportunities to hone their God-given talents so they can become average

at subjects they dislike or have no affinity to. They end up all round average.

Imagine a style of parenting which focuses on the positive; that seeks to identify and nurture what is best in both parent and child. Imagine parenting that is appreciative of all that a child brings to the family; that sees a child's refusal to follow orders for the sake of following, as independent or critical thinking, leadership potential rather than "hard ears" or willfulness. The challenge here is that we are unaccustomed to focusing on positives. We have an abundant and easily accessible vocabulary of flaws and inadequacies, but coming up with positives and strengths takes a little time.

Which brings me to another recent rediscovery: Positive Psychology. According to the US Positive Psychology Center: "Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive." This field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play.

The Center's website explains that since World War II, psychology has focused

its efforts on psychological problems and how to remedy them. This has led to an improved understanding and treatment of psychological disorders. However, one consequence of the focus on psychological problems is that psychology has had little to offer about what makes life most worth living.

Positive psychology seeks to correct the imbalance by focusing on strengths as well as weaknesses, on building the best things in life as well as repairing the worst. It asserts that human goodness and excellence are just as authentic as distress and disorder and that life entails more than the undoing of problems.

Positive Psychology is concerned with exploring positive emotions, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. This entails the study of such things as contentment, happiness and hope for the future. It has resulted in research into strengths and virtues and what fosters better communities: justice, responsibility, civility, parenting, nurturance, work ethic, leadership and other admirable human qualities.

Start now to increase the positivity in your parenting: Catch a child doing something good and complement him or her on it.

Appreciate your children. Before you complain take a moment to see, really see your child and appreciate what you see – out loud.

Happy parenting.

To find out more about Appreciative Inquiry visit AI Commons:
<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>

Positive Psychology
<http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/>

To get a free assessment of your strengths visit the VIA Institute on Character:
<http://uat.viacharacter.org/VIACHARACTERPROFILE/GetYourFreeProfile/tabid/62/language/en-US/Default.aspx>
The site also has an assessment for youth.

A great short video story to boost your appreciation of your children: Animal school:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wN7QfjIcVvA>



Barbara King is a founder of T&T Innovative Parenting Support. She is a facilitator of Parent Education programmes and provides counselling and support group services through The Parent Support Centre, Arima, Trinidad. Tel: (868) 664-1520

World's Least Developed Countries Set to Jump Start Transition to a Green Economy

With their low-carbon profile, rich natural assets and promising policy initiatives, the world's 48 least developed countries are well-positioned to jump start the transition to a green economy, according to a new UN report released at the start of the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) held in May.

The joint report, issued by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), points to the economic and human development opportunities of a green economy transition for the world's least developed countries (LDCs).

While developed and emerging countries face substantial costs of 'decarbonization', as well as costs linked to retiring inefficient fossil fuel-based technologies, the report suggests that LDCs can avoid these

GREEN economy

Why a Green Economy Matters for the Least Developed Countries



hurdles by maintaining and expanding sustainable economic activities they are already utilizing.

For example, low-carbon, labour-intensive agriculture and community-based forestry are sustainable practices that have existed for decades in these countries, and they will be central elements in greening these sectors.

In addition, the report, *Why a Green Economy Matters for the Least Developed Countries*, finds that new opportunities offered by a green economy will help LDCs meet their Millennium Development Goals.

Structural constraints, including dependence on fragile agriculture, limited access to energy and low economic diversification, which have previously prevented LDCs from significantly reducing poverty and achieving higher rates of development, resulted from investments and policies that undervalued the importance of the economic sectors most relevant to the livelihoods of the poor.

In their foreword to the report, Achim Steiner, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the UNEP, Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and

Cheik Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and High Representative for UN-OHRLS, stress that “refocusing policies and investments to target sectors and areas including renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, tourism and enhanced ecosystem services can lead to the economic empowerment of low income populations, be more conducive to inclusive growth and jobs and make a significant contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the poorest countries”.

Governments have a central role to play in putting in place strategies, targeted public expenditures, policy reforms and regulatory changes to promote further investment and initiatives by the private sector and civil society. Already, decision makers in a number of LDCs are taking bold measures that can set the course for this transition to occur.

“LDCs face unprecedented vulnerabilities across a range of challenges. UNEP is committed to assisting them to reduce these risks, while growing their economies and achieving their sustainable development objectives,” said Mr Steiner.

“The shift to a global green economy can put LDCs in an opportune position if the right enabling policies are put in place nationally and internationally - ones that accelerate their development rather than constraining it, ones that value, invest and re-invest in natural assets and low-carbon industries alongside human well-being and social equity.”

Dr Supachai of UNCTAD added: “There are at least four key elements that need to be addressed for LDCs’ successful transition to a green economy. First, identifying new sources of funding that can be directly applied to transitional efforts; second, creating an enabling environment that is conducive to private investment in green economy



markets; third, taking advantage of trade to create global markets for LDCs’ green goods and services exports; and fourth, designing new and effective mechanisms to transfer green technologies to LDCs.”

Numerous examples highlight progress being achieved in a range of economic sectors, from energy to agriculture, through government, private sector and civil society initiatives.

- Despite being an LDC far from its major export markets, Uganda more than quadrupled its exports of organic agricultural products between 2003 and 2008, tapping into a global market of US\$ 60 billion. Farm gate prices of organic pineapple, ginger and vanilla were 300%, 185%, and 150% higher, respectively, than conventional products in 2006, making sustainable forms of production highly profitable for producers and local communities.

- Nepal's approach to Community Forest Management continues to generate employment and income from the sustainable harvesting of timber and non timber forest products. Sustainable forest management approaches in the country have contributed to reversing a trend of decline in forest cover of 1.9% per year during the 1990s, into an annual increase of 1.35% over the period 2000 to 2005.
- In Laos, the National Ecotourism Strategy Action Plan, based on the sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources and the delivery of measurable socio-economic benefits to local communities, has turned ecotourism into a thriving economic activity accounting for about half of total tourism revenue. Overall, the number of international arrivals in Laos has jumped from 1 million in 2005 to over 2 million in 2009.
- In Mali, farmers supported through field training have significantly reduced the use of imported pesticides and at the same time expanded the use of organic fertilizers and improved soil amendments. This resulted in increased production while reducing input costs.

Bringing electricity to the rural poor is one of the most important contributions that a green economy can make to LDC economies, says the report.

Lack of modern electricity infrastructure in rural regions and access to the development

options that electricity opens are persistent impediments to economic development in LDCs where 77% of the population is without access to electricity. Most affected are the 71% of the population of LDCs that live in rural regions, who rely on biomass burning as the only source of energy.

- The successful Grameen Shakti Programme in Bangladesh highlights the importance of clean energy solutions and suitable approaches to financing their adoption by low income communities. Grameen Shakti (or Grameen Energy in English) provides soft credits through innovative financial packages to make solar home systems (SHSs) available and affordable to rural populations. By the end of 2009, more than 320,000 SHSs had been installed under the programme, in addition to biogas plants and improved cooking stoves. Grameen Shakti



aims to have installed over 1 million SHSs by 2015.

- The potential for energy and resource efficiency is large in LDCs, with important gains possible through energy saving. In Senegal, a net energy importer, a 100% replacement of installed incandescent lamps with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) at an estimated cost of US\$ 52 million, would lead to energy savings of 73% and cost savings of nearly US\$ 30 million per year.
- Opportunities to leapfrog are being seized where they exist. For example, in the aluminum sector, aluminum smelters in Africa are among the most energy-

efficient in the world mainly because new production facilities employ the latest smelting technologies.

Despite their limited contribution to the problem of climate change, LDCs are among the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change, making it critical for the international community to scale up international cooperation in support of adaptation to climate change. Of particular importance is the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), created to address the climate change adaptation needs of the LDCs.

A supportive international policy framework that responds to specific challenges facing the poorest countries will be

critical in ensuring LDCs' successful transition to a green economy. International sources of financing to support clean technology adoption and trade-related capacity building in green sectors are urgently needed.

"Through concerted national and international action, realizing a green economy could make a valuable contribution to enhanced economic diversification, inclusive growth, poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in LDCs," said Mr Diarra of UN-OHRLS.

"The outcomes of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries can provide a critical foundation and action points in this direction."

Cities emerge top in United Nations-Sasakawa Award competition

The cities of San Francisco (Philippines), Santa Fe (Argentina), and District of North Vancouver (Canada), were unveiled as winners of the United Nations-Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction at a special ceremony on the second last day of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva.

San Francisco, a small coastal city prone to typhoons, won US\$25,000, and was chosen for its innovative use of the Purok system, a traditional method of self-organization within villages where members voluntarily contribute to a money bank used by those in need of emergency funds after a disaster.

Also, with limited access to the Internet, cellphones and radios, the Purok system is used to disseminate information and risk assessments, with Purok coordinators acting as couriers of information to residents.

One of two cities receiving US\$12,500 was Santa Fe, a city frequently hit by floods, which was recognized for effectively communicating risk to everyday citizens. In areas with many informal settlers, several thousand have been "regularized" and given certificates of occupancy, debt cancellation certificates and sale contracts for their homes. Scores of families in zones not protected by flood embankments have been relocated in this way.

The District of North Vancouver, which experienced a landslide in 2005, also received US\$12,500.

BOOKS

"Forest Carbon Management In India: A Framework of Policies and Trade Strategies"

by Dr Promode Kant

Forests are at once both the single most important source and sink of carbon dioxide.

Forest Carbon Management implies managing forests sustainably for increased carbon sequestration, longer storage and reduced release of carbon dioxide, and efficient transfer of carbon benefits to the stakeholders, consistent with the requirements of biodiversity conservation and the protection of the rights of the indigenous people.

It can become reality only with enabling national and provincial policies.

The framework for policies and trade strategies proposed in this book would help fulfil obligations under the UNFCCC, lead to significant increase in public and private investment in tree growing, make the rights of tribal and other communities on forests economically meaningful and contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while ensuring the international credibility of country's carbon sequestration and storage certification process.



Promode Kant

FOREST CARBON MANAGEMENT IN INDIA A FRAMEWORK OF POLICIES AND TRADE STRATEGIES



World Bank Releases Report on 'Mitigating Climate Change through Wetlands Restoration'

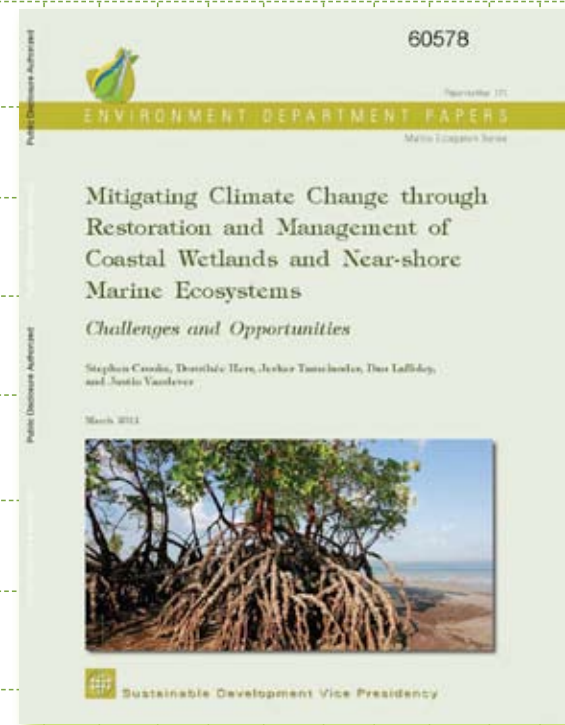
The World Bank has released a report titled “Mitigating Climate Change through Restoration and Management of Coastal Wetlands and Near-shore Marine Ecosystems,” which finds that drainage and degradation of coastal wetlands emit significant amounts of carbon dioxide directly into the atmosphere and lead to decreased carbon sequestration.

The report, written in partnership with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and wetland specialists ESA PWA, underscored the need for: protecting coastal wetlands; creating incentives for avoiding their degradation and improving their restoration; and including the protection of these ecosystems in carbon emission reduction strategies and in climate negotiations.

The report highlights that the current rates of degradation and loss of coastal wetlands and destruction of about 20% of the world's mangroves has led to the release of centuries of accumulated carbon. This has also disturbed the natural protection against storm surges and other extreme weather events. Of the 15 coastal deltas studied in the report, seven were found to have released more than 500 million tons of carbon dioxide each since the wetlands were drained, mostly in the past 100 years.

Mangroves, tidal marshes and sea-grass meadows remove carbon from the atmosphere and lock it into the soil, where it can stay for millennia.

Unlike terrestrial forests, these marine ecosystems are continuously building carbon pools, storing huge amounts of “blue carbon” in the sediment below them. When these systems are degraded due to drainage or conversion for



agriculture and aquaculture, they emit large and continuous amounts of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere.

According to the report, managing coastal ecosystems for the range of services they provide can complement existing approaches to nature-based solutions to reduce the effects of climate change.

Such investments have the potential to link to REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, as well as conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of carbon stocks) and other carbon financing mechanisms, provided that protocols on accounting, verification and reporting of net carbon uptake can be agreed.



UN Announces Winners of **FLAGSHIP ENVIRONMENT AWARD**

Mexican President Felipe Calderon, global music legend Angélique Kidjo and adventurer Louis Palmer are among the five winners of the 2011 Champions of the Earth awards, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced.

They received their awards at a ceremony hosted by UNEP Goodwill Ambassador, Gisele Bündchen, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, along with fellow laureates green entrepreneur Zhang Yue and scientist and campaigner Dr. Olga Speranskaya.

From using green technology cutting air pollution in China, to tackling the impact of toxic chemicals in Eastern Europe or crossing the globe to fly the flag for solar power, this year's award winners are environmental champions whose daily work, leadership and advocacy represent green innovation in action.

The full list of the 2011 Champions of the Earth is as follows:

- **Policy Leadership:** President Felipe Calderon (Mexico) for commitment to lead international efforts to combat climate change;
- **Science and Innovation:** Dr. Olga Speranskaya (Russia) for successfully mobilizing civil society in eliminating obsolete pesticides and toxic chemicals in the former Soviet region,
- **Entrepreneurial Vision:** BROAD Group / Mr. Zhang Yue (China) for business leadership on energy efficiency and sustainable production,
- **Inspiration and Action:** Mr. Louis Palmer (Switzerland) for raising global awareness of the need for renewable energy and sustainable transport and Ms. Angélique Kidjo (Benin) for advocacy on social equity and women empowerment in support of sustainable development.

"The 2011 Champions of the Earth winners are inspirational examples of how people from all walks of life are coming up with exciting, innovative solutions to environmental challenges. Whether through their business ventures, leadership, campaigning efforts or passion for technology, they are real examples of the global transition towards a more sustainable Green Economy", said UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

"As the world prepares for the UN Sustainable Development Conference in Rio de Janeiro next year, these five Champions of the Earth demonstrate how collective, positive action - from greener cars and air conditioning to tackling harmful pesticides or advocating for global action on carbon - can help tackle climate change and deliver environmental sustainability for communities and economies in all parts of the world", added Mr. Steiner.



“When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon,
my soul expands in worship of the Creator.”

Mahatma Gandhi

1869-1948

Indian Philosopher, internationally esteemed
for his doctrine of nonviolent protest

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