



Climate Change & Impacts on the Caribbean Sea

Month - day - 202X



ACP MEAs 3

Climate Change & Why It Matters?

Climate change is essentially the rise in average surface temperatures on Earth.¹

It is often referred to as global warming and human activities have also been identified as causes of recent climate change.

Impacts of Climate Change

Small-island developing states are least able to adapt to these climatic changes. Climate change will pose serious threats for food and water security. In the Wider Caribbean Region, higher temperatures, reduced rainfall, more frequent droughts will cause more heat stress on crops/animals, and reduce growth rates and thus leads to lower yields.²



- Among the most diverse ecosystems impacted in the Caribbean are coral reefs as they are highly sensitive to increases in sea surface temperature.³
- Coral reefs in the Caribbean have suffered significant changes due to the proximal effects of a growing human population, jeopardizing over 4 billion dollars in services worth from fisheries, tourism and coastal protection.⁴
- According to the latest World Bank analysis, Caribbean Coral Reefs could disappear by 2060.⁵
- The Wider Caribbean Region has experienced major losses of Reef fish in the last 15 years.⁶
- Climate impacts may destroy wetlands which help in mitigating storm effects; lessening erosion and replenishing coastal groundwater tables.⁷
- A recent study suggests Climate Change is linked to 400,000 deaths worldwide each year, projecting deaths to increase to over 600,000 per year by 2030.⁸



- A number of Caribbean cities which are tourism hotspots have substantial areas at risk if the sea level rises by even 1 meter.⁹
- Taken collectively, all the Small Island States of the Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans contribute less than 1 % to global emissions.¹⁰
- Hurricanes are the leading cause of disasters in the Caribbean, making the region one of the most vulnerable in the world. Only 62 percent of the natural disasters caused by tropical cyclones over the last 65 years have data on the damages they caused.¹¹
- Over the past 65 years, the total damages experienced in the Caribbean amounted to US\$52 billion (in constant 2010 US\$) for 148 disasters (with accessible information). An average disaster causes damages of US\$352 million based on the occurrence of more intense storms.¹²
- As a result of economic realities and access to amenities, the discourse has been that women face greater adversities and are more vulnerable to climate change than their male counterparts.¹³

The Government of Jamaica/European Union/United Nations Environment Programme Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project implemented between 2011-2013:

- Rehabilitated watersheds through slope stabilization measures such as reforestation of denuded hillsides
- Increased resilience of selected coastal areas against potential climate change impacts
- Fostered climate change capacity building and awareness raising.

The United Nations System supports actions to combat Climate Change

- The UN system empowers Governments to take action on all climate-related sectors providing resources, science, technology, education and training, capacity development, partnerships, and data and information.
- The UN system also supports national efforts to reduce emissions and build resilience in climate change adaptation.¹⁴

Footnotes

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United Nations
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Caribbean Environment
Programme and Cartagena
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