



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Wilton Park



Image: Shadowfox

Report

Caribbean 2030 - new thinking for a new generation III: Caribbean sustainability, green growth and good governance

Wednesday 12 – Friday 14 October 2016 | WP1513

In association with:





Report

Caribbean 2030 - new thinking for a new generation III: Caribbean sustainability, green growth and good governance

Wednesday 12 – Friday 14 October 2016 | WP1513

The journey

Caribbean 2030 was initiated to create an active network of new and younger leaders from across the region who can work towards realising the full potential of the Caribbean region. The Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI), Wilton Park and the Foreign Commonwealth Office have been the major partners of the initiative since the first Caribbean 2030 meeting of new and next generation of leaders which took place in the United Kingdom (UK) in June 2015. Among the participants were politicians, innovators, entrepreneurs, educators, communications specialists and diaspora members. At that meeting, the participants articulated their vision for the Caribbean. Governance challenges, transnational crime, the decline of regional industries, international diplomacy, disaster vulnerability and energy security were some of the issues discussed. A discussion of the key issues raised and vision outlined is summarised in the conference report at <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WP1404-Report.pdf>

Eight months later the group met again in Kingston, Jamaica to build upon the foundation established at the first meeting by defining next steps for promoting and supporting innovation and entrepreneurship within the region. The meeting explored four thematic areas: finance; credit and business growth; trade within and beyond the region; green growth and sustainability; and Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and open/big data. The report, <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WP1462-Report.pdf>, highlights the discussions and recommendations.

Recognising the changes in political leadership and events that took place since the first meeting in 2015 and the fact that the meeting in Jamaica was held during election period, the group was eager to start charting a path towards achieving their vision for the next decade and a half as many of the original participants are now in government or other positions of leadership and had already started to influence regional policies. A list of the events and developments since June 2015 is as follows.

| Development | Date |
|---|----------------|
| Dominica devastated by Tropical Storm Erika | August 2015 |
| Political change in Trinidad and Tobago | September 2015 |
| United Nations inaugurated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to replace the expired Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) | September 2015 |
| Commonwealth Secretary General declared | November 2015 |
| General Election in Belize | November 2015 |
| Outbreak of bacterial infections in neonatal units in two Jamaican hospitals | November 2015 |
| General Election in St Vincent and the Grenadines | December 2015 |
| COP 21 Conference Paris agreement to combat climate change | December 2016 |
| Political change in Jamaica | February 2016 |
| President Barack Obama visits Cuba and calls for the removal of the U.S. trade embargo | March 2016 |
| Damage due to Hurricane Matthew | July 2016 |
| Jamaica joins Guyana as the other country in the Caribbean Community country to outlaw Styrofoam | July 2016 |

The main objective of this third meeting in the UK was to discuss and identify, as the Caribbean 2030 Leaders' Network, a series of realistic and actionable targets and strategies to achieve measurable progress ahead of the next meeting expected in late 2017. The action plan for harnessing the potential of the Caribbean region focused on green growth and sustainability, and on open data and good governance.

Growth and sustainability?

1. Why green growth? Green growth aims to foster economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets are used sustainably and continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which well-being relies. According to the World Bank, growth that is green is efficient in its use of natural resources, clean in that it minimises pollution and environmental impacts, and resilient, in that it accounts for natural hazards. Unless countries move to greener growth paths characterised by economic growth and human development that better conserves natural resources, continuing environmental degradation will lead to significant negative impacts on human well-being. These impacts will put economic growth and development at risk. Hence, green growth that is inclusive can help to implement social and sustainable development goals, respectful of regional conditions and preferences.

Key issues discussed

- The region has the opportunity to choose a path that can lead to robust growth without locking it into unsustainable patterns that in the long run can prove to be more expensive, less efficient, and less resilient which will ultimately constraint further growth.
- While the region currently has the cleanest energy mix in the world, the electricity sector's carbon intensity has been rising, a trend that is expected to continue. To

address this, the region will have to rely more on other cleaner sources of energy—such as hydro and wind.

- The sustainability of the region's growth will also depend on its commitment to use its unique natural assets in a sustainable way. The very advantages that the region's natural endowment provides – rich water resources, fertile land, and unparalleled biodiversity—are under threat from the spread of inefficient land use such as deforestation.
- The region has the potential to become a leader in adopting a more efficient and climate-smart agricultural practices that do not come at a cost to the environment and are better prepared for new climate patterns.
- There is no single blue print for inclusive green growth in the Caribbean. However, many of the answers to the challenge of how to grow in sustainable and inclusive ways lie within the region's own experiences. Policies and targeted investments can boost economic growth as well as help realize the aspirations of the growing middle class for a better quality of life, create opportunities for the poorest and most vulnerable segments of society, and protect the environmental assets in the region.
- Recycling is still limited.
- Most countries have provisions to protect green spaces but these policies are not always effective as the demand for low income housing leads to encroachment into marginal lands.

Related action items

- Develop and monitor Sustainable Development Indicators for the Caribbean (Micro and Macro indicators);
- Identify and design a programme for the elimination of perverse incentives with regard to green growth in the region;
- Review Styrofoam and plastics packaging policy and input to policy processes.

Why open data and good governance?

2. Open data refers to government data and information that has been created or commissioned by a public entity which is made accessible for public use and re-use. Open data can be classified as data that is:
 - Made available and not subjected to privacy, security or privilege limitations;
 - Collected at source, at the most atomic level, not in aggregate or modified norms;
 - Made available as quickly as possible, to preserve the value of the data, to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes;
 - Structured to allow automated processing; and
 - Available to anyone with no requirement of registration and in a format so that no entity has exclusive control.
3. Open data has emerged as one of the most globally significant policy and technological developments within the last few years. It has been propelled by a growing consensus and an irrefutable logic in the notion that data created by public funds should be publicly accessible and freely reusable because data as a common resource is not scarce and cannot be diminished with use. Open data has been demonstrated to be a catalyst for innovation in many countries. Open data initiatives are being pursued in many places as a platform to promote transparency, improve public sector synergy and efficiency, and facilitate the creation of new activities.
4. Cultural and structural barriers to open data in the Caribbean, however, have prevented most countries from reaping the economic benefits of this initiative. Beyond the

economic rationale, an open data policy agenda has positive social and political externalities as is evident in Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominican Republic, Haiti and St. Vincent & the Grenadines which have been able to take steps towards open data over the last five years. The Government of Jamaica has demonstrated a leadership role in the region in terms of shaping and leading the open data discourse through deliberate and progressive policy actions and initiatives.

Key issues discussed

- Open data policy should leverage existing public accountability and access to information policies as the foundation. Building on such a legislative foundation will give credence to new open data requirements and inform the structure of the policy as well as provide the opportunity to modernize the existing legislation to reflect modern, progressive guidelines.
- For the success of any open data programme the governments in the region should create meaningful opportunities for the public to share their concerns about data quality, quantity, selection, and format, as well as the user-friendliness of the website or portals. This feedback should also officially form a part of the considerations during the policy review process.
- The implementation of open data policy should be done in the context of the policy being sustainable and the “openness” of data being permanent. It is therefore imperative that sufficient funding be earmarked for both the execution and maintenance of the open data initiative. One way to do this is to consider partnerships which can assist in identifying funding sources. These partnerships can also be useful in increasing the availability of open data, and lending their expertise in data mining.
- The World Bank is an active proponent of Open Data initiatives and the Open Government Partnership.
- Most Caribbean governments have been slow to embrace the open data movement.
- Jamaica has taken the lead in the Caribbean with funding from the World Bank. Their open data portal was launched in June 2016.
- CAPRI has assessed the economic potential of open data as a catalyst for Jamaica’s growth and innovation agenda. In addition, preliminary work has been undertaken to explore the potential for open-data enabled interventions in Agriculture including the impact on the effectiveness of delivery of extension services to farmers in Jamaica.

Related action items

- Define the principles of open data for transparency, accountability and integrity and articulate its benefits;
- Conduct an assessment of the work being done by the Caribbean Open Institute and Caribbean Telecoms Union;
- Seek funding to conduct open data readiness assessments in other Caribbean countries not to include Jamaica, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Dominica, and Grenada.
- Map the state of legislation for access to information, data privacy, and anti-corruption in the region.
- Share best practices on how to make data public.

Next steps

5. The group identified a vision for the Caribbean of a peaceful, self-sufficient, globally competitive and resilient region which would motivate the group’s work for the next 12 months. Three priority areas for research were agreed on for the Green Growth and Sustainable theme while four were outlined for open data and good governance.

Priority was given to initiatives with high potential for impact, enabled by leveraging the skills and networks available within the group as well as the research published by CAPRI in both areas, which will serve as a foundation for evidence-based action.

6. The Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI) agreed to provide administrative/secretarial support during the period to ensure follow-up actions are scheduled and executed, supported by appropriate mechanisms to facilitate document sharing and collaboration. It was agreed that a comprehensive work plan with supporting results and responsibility matrices, milestones and timelines will be finalised and shared with the entire group by December 1, 2016. The first meeting of cluster leads to be scheduled within two weeks of the posting of the work plan on a secure section of CAPRI's website. The objectives for the next 12 months per policy area are outlined below. The respective cluster leads and team members are also identified and are subject to change based on availability and willingness to participate in follow-up meetings up to October 2017.

The group identified and agreed to undertake the following projects. Members of the Caribbean2030 Leaders Network committed themselves to lead and support specific projects.

Green growth and sustainability

- Develop and monitor Sustainable Development Indicators for the Caribbean (Micro and Macro indicators)
- Identify and design a programme for the elimination of perverse incentives with regard to green growth in the region
- Review Styrofoam and plastics packaging policy and input to policy processes (waste management)

Open data and good governance

- Define the principles of open data for transparency, accountability and integrity and articulate its benefits
- Conduct an assessment of the work being done by the Caribbean Open Institute and Caribbean Telecoms Union. Seek partnership.
- Seek funding to conduct open data readiness assessments in other Caribbean countries (not to include Jamaica) and identify key government persons to liaise with World Bank programme.
- Map the state of legislation for access to information, data privacy, and anti-corruption. Share best practices. Create an index and ranking.

Rochelle Samuels

Wilton Park | December 2016

Wilton Park reports are brief summaries of the main points and conclusions of a conference. The reports reflect rapporteurs' personal interpretations of the proceedings – as such they do not constitute any institutional policy of Wilton Park nor do they necessarily represent the views of the rapporteur.

Should you wish to read other Wilton Park reports, or participate in upcoming Wilton Park conferences, please consult our website www.wiltonpark.org.uk

To receive our e-newsletter and latest updates on conferences subscribe to <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/newsletter/>