

# INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SUSTAINABLE OCEANS

19-20 JULY 2016 | THE CAPITOL HOTEL TOKYU | TOKYO, JAPAN

## SESSION SIX: CROSS-SECTORAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Photo credit: Nick Hall

### **Caribbean Biodiversity Fund**

#### **Nassau, The Bahamas**

##### **1) What is the focus of this project?**

The Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) is a regional fund currently operating in eight Caribbean countries (Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) to provide a sustainable flow of funds to support activities that contribute substantially to the conservation, protection and maintenance of biodiversity in the national protected areas systems – or any other areas of environmental significance – located in its participating countries. The fund was created to help close the region’s conservation financing gap. Together with an initial set of eight National Conservation Trust Funds (NCTFs) being established in the region, this forms the Caribbean Sustainable Finance Architecture for Conservation that will provide sustainable resources to assist countries in achieving their goals under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, and national conservation priorities.

The establishment of this Architecture is one of the primary actions being taken to build regional capacity in the Caribbean, attract resources for conservation, and enhance the capacity required at the local country level to advance the environmental and conservation agenda. The NCTFs will play catalytic roles at the national and community levels by bringing multiple sectors (government, civil society and private sector) together to engage in conservation, build absorptive capacity for effective project implementation, and support local civil society and government institutions.

##### **2) Which organizations and other partners are involved?**

This initiative is led by the CBF itself, which was established in 2012 as a not-for-profit organization. Direct partners currently include the eight NCTFs (one in each participating country) that will receive funding from the CBF, and the donors are the German government through the German Development Bank (KfW), the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through World Bank and UNDP. Strategic Partners include:

- Caribbean Challenge Initiative - a Caribbean government led initiative with the objective to effectively conserve at least 20% of marine and coastal environments in participating countries by 2020 through the establishment of a sustainable financial architecture. The CBF plays a central role in this architecture and is working to support this initiative by building political capacity throughout the region.
- RedLAC (Latin American and Caribbean Network of Environment Funds) - a network of conservation trust funds that provides guidance and tools to NCTFs.

3) **What activities or tools have proven successful in building capacity?**

The CBF and its donors, through current and future support, is providing financial support and technical expertise to the NCTFs as they progress along their path to becoming fully operational. Support has been provided in the development of NCTF legal documents needed for establishment (i.e. Article of Association, by-laws, etc.) and towards the development of grant making rules and policies for the NCTFs. In addition, training sessions are being conducted for the Boards of each of the NCTFs. Technical assistance to develop sustainable financing mechanisms for each NCTF, which will provide each NCTF with a long-term source of funding in addition to the funding provided by CBF, is also being provided. To date, five of the NCTFs have been legally established and all are in the process of finalizing their operational documents.

4) **What challenges have been experienced, specifically related to maintaining a focus on capacity building and/or replicating the project in other areas?**

Establishing new conservation trust funds is not an easy task. While a few conservation trust funds already exist in the Caribbean, these are still a relatively new construct in the region, which adds to the complexity. While so far the process shows significant progress, aligning government and civil society visions and needs has been challenging. In addition, conducting all the official steps to create the institutions has encountered some difficulties as the timeline for processes to be completed are outside the control of either CBF or the NCTFs. Registrations of the institutions, for example, have taken longer than expected, which in turn delays the whole process, including capacity building activities, for each of the NCTFs.

5) **What are the next steps for the project?**

The CBF is in the process of establishing its 2020 Strategic Plan, which is aimed at consolidating the Caribbean Sustainable Finance Architecture for Conservation. One of the key aspects of this Strategic Plan is to ensure that the NCTFs to be supported by the CBF are successfully established and operational. This will ensure the sustainability of the Architecture and its capacity to become an effective network of conservation trust funds able to contribute to conservation in the region. In addition, the CBF will explore extending its thematic scope to include other areas, such as climate change (particularly adaptation), as well as expanding its geographic scope.

[www.caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org](http://www.caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org)