



4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SIDS4 Conference Side Event

Promoting Green, Resilient and Inclusive Urban Development in Small Island Developing States

**Tuesday 28 May 2024, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM AST, Room 10 at
the American University of Antigua College of Medicine,
University Park, Jabberwock Beach Road, Coolidge,
Antigua**

**Organized by: United Nations Human Settlements
Programme (UN-Habitat) and Development Bank
of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF)**

Background on the event (one paragraph)

The impacts of climate change worsen daily and are putting pressure on local and national governments, communities and urban ecosystems. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly affected. Under the conference theme “Revitalizing SIDS Economies for Accelerated and Sustainable Growth”, this session gathered diverse stakeholders from African, Caribbean and Pacific SIDS to share lessons and discuss opportunities for promoting urban resilience and green development to address local challenges, such as informality, crisis prevention and economic recovery. Thought leaders and decision-makers elaborated how SIDS have and can recover from the economic impact of pandemics such as COVID-19, while contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This inter-regional exchange discussed concrete solutions to strengthen the capacity of SIDS, at the national and local levels, to promote green, resilient and inclusive urban and economic development.

Key Issues discussed (5-8 bullet points)

- Lessons learned on crisis recovery, opportunities arising and actions that can be taken to promote green and inclusive recovery & development in SIDS.
 - Specificities of SIDS lay in the blurred borders between the rural and the urban world, calling for a holistic and integrated approach to urbanization and disaster management and relief. “We cannot urbanize everything” says Gina Bonne from the Indian Ocean Commission. But we need to bring the service a city provides to the needs of SIDS.
 - Climate disasters lead to highly critical issues in SIDS, such as the vacancy of the territory, the imperious need for reconstruction of housing and others, aggravated by the geographical profile of the territory. The session stressed the challenges to develop rapid and tailored mechanisms in managing climate risks and implementing disaster risk management and highlighted some key sectors to mitigate them: education, regional cooperation, data sharing, information and knowledge and leveraging both non-residential UN agencies and the private sector.
 - Crisis recovery has uncovered opportunities for economic transformation through participative planning, regional integration, sustainable development and disaster and climate risk resilience, green and / or inclusive recovery processes for SIDS (e.g. reconstruction of climate smart homes in Antigua and Barbuda after cyclone Irma).
- Economic incentives for green crisis recovery, the role of climate and development financing and how the existing opportunities can be better tailored to meet the specific needs of SIDS.
 - International gatherings (Pacific Urban Forum) have a strong convening power and bring insightful joint outcome statements highlighting the need for the integration of cultural and traditional knowledge alongside economic incentives. Highlighting the need to break silos regarding climate change and recovery (e.g. 2050 Pacific Blue Strategy)
 - SDG localization is a key strategy for recovery in SIDS as Fiji’s Voluntary Local Review, ensuring that recovery efforts are aligned with global sustainability targets.
 - Coordination and mutualization of efforts across SIDS governments and sectors are key to leverage finance mechanisms, highlighting bankable projects, economic transfer, digitalization, innovation services, crowded investments and pooled finance towards better regional cooperation through IOC and other organizations.

Key recommendations for action (5-6 bullet points)

- Recognizing the common issues linking the impact of climate change and SIDS geographical profiles (meteorological threats, geographical hazards, lack of preparedness and adaptation in vulnerable settlements) and their singular expression in different local contexts.
- Recognizing the need to leverage available and accessible funds for SIDS and the need for more agility in spending and especially tailored mechanisms in rapid spending of funds for disaster relief.
- Welcoming initiatives and funds as vehicles to bridge the gap between availability and accessibility such as the biodiversity trust fund, the Caribbean biodiversity fund esp for ecosystem-based Adaptation, the Seychelle Climate Trust Fund, the Ocean Conservation Credits, the Palau Green Fee, etc.
- Encouraging multilevel climate action and cooperation of national governments to accelerate deployment of climate finance to support local climate action and strengthen local financial, technical and workforce skills capacities, as well as looking for civil society support in SIDS.
- Encouraging initiatives like the Multilayered Vulnerability Assessment tool as key to improve data quality, a critical issue, in SIDS and finding new ways to express vulnerability in data to better allocate ODA to LDCs and SIDS.