

PROSPECTIVE SPONSORS

**INAUGURAL
CARIBBEAN SCIENCE
SYMPOSIUM ON WATER**

PURPOSE, GOALS & ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

WEEK OF MARCH 22ND - 26TH, 2021



THE CARIBBEAN SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM ON WATER

Water is intimately connected to the way of life in the Caribbean – reaching across environment, economy, social well-being, systems of governance, rights and dignity. Many of the anticipated impacts of climate change, including unpredictable weather patterns and increases in the intensity of extreme climate events, have severe implications for the region’s water security and overall development. Increased incidences of droughts and hurricanes are already exacerbating water scarcity across the region, posing significant threats to human health and well-being and the productivity of key sectors such as tourism and agriculture.

Addressing existing issues confronting the regional water sector, such as challenges regarding the storage, treatment and distribution of available water resources, is therefore key to adapting the Caribbean to future climate changes and in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 on Water and several other related SDGs. Water is also critical for successful climate change mitigation given its importance to energy security.

Ensuring that everyone has access to sustainable water and sanitation services is a critical climate change mitigation strategy for the future. Yet the science, research and engineering communities are only just beginning to translate and understand these climate predictions and the extent and nature of the risks these changes pose to regional economies, societies and environments. Given these risks and the mounting scientific evidence that suggests that most of these changes will take place over the course of this century, the convening of a [Caribbean Science Symposium on Water](#) is both timely and relevant.

This Symposium aligns well and supports several recent and ongoing regional initiatives and programmes, including but not limited to: The Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to a Changing Climate and Implementation Plan, the Comprehensive Disaster Management Framework, and the Sendai Framework. Additionally, there are regional projects such as the Global Environment Facility funded Integrated Approach to Water and Wastewater Management (CReW+) Integrating Land Water and Ecosystems Management (IWEco), and the Regional Strategic Action Plan for Governance and Building Climate Resilience in the Water Sector (RSAP).

The World Bank's Pilot Project for Climate Resilience (PPCR) and Disaster Vulnerability and Resilience Project (DVRP), funding to the water sector through the Inter-American Development Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank and, the Green Climate Fund all attest to the importance of the water sector to the future development of the Region. Additionally, Caribbean academics are actively engaged in a wide range of research initiatives contributing to the better understanding of, and solutions to, the myriad of water challenges facing the region.

Whilst these developments in the research and policy communities are starting to advance our understanding of some of the challenges climate change will pose to the regional water sector, there is a noticeable gap between research outputs, and their transposition from the science to the policy domain, and their use and relevance in informing evidence-based decision-making.

The [Caribbean Science Symposium on Water](#) provides an opportunity to bridge that gap by bringing the two sides together. The Symposium will bring together representatives from the research, development, economic, legislative and policy communities to share and discuss ideas on ongoing scientific studies, initiatives, innovations and best practices related to enhancing water secure developments and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Caribbean.

The event seeks to attract high-quality scientific, research, technical and exploratory papers that can offer useful insights on key challenges impacting the access, management, utilisation, and sustainability of water resources across the region and potential solutions. A key feature will be bringing Science and Policy together, to interrogate science outputs from a policy perspective to enhance policy dialogue across the region and inform adaptation [pathways in the water sector](#). Without sound science, evidence-based policy formulation cannot occur and places the economies of the region at greater risk of maladaptation.

The Symposium is designed not only to be an opportunity to share research outputs but importantly provide interactive opportunities to bridge the gap between science outputs and policy formulation and be an arena for exploring the practical and policy implications of these outputs. The intention is that, in collaboration with several regional partners including the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, the CARICOM Community and the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association, substantive outputs from the Symposium in the form of policy perspective papers, will be presented to relevant Ministerial fora including the High Level Forum of Ministers with responsibility for Water. It will also provide greater scientific and technical insight into the continuing development of the Caribbean's Regional Strategic Action Plan for Water and other related regional and sub-regional programmes, policies, strategies and action plans relating to water resources management.

The Symposium is scheduled to take place during the week of March 22nd - 26th, 2021 in the region. The main theme of the Symposium will be “**Building Resilience in the Regional Water Sector to Address Climatological and Hydrological Risks and Threats.**” We envision a two-day Symposium featuring two keynote presentations, round table policy forums and discussions, expert panel sessions and possibly a half-day field trip.

We intend to offer a technical workshop to assist graduate students in research design and to host a forum where experts, technicians, policy makers, scientists and young persons can identify areas of research that are lacking and of paramount importance to the region. This will help guide aspiring researchers in their field of work in the area of IWRM. Anticipated outputs encompass ‘Best-in-Show’ research and policy relevant work, policy perspective papers, and online published proceedings, database of research topics, case studies and bridging the gap of the science policy interface.

The Symposium is supported in part by the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C). It will be the first of its kind for the Caribbean, and aims to feed into several regional and global activities in 2021 of importance to the Caribbean Community, including the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP).

The initiative will be a signature event for the GWP-C and is expected to provide a dynamic platform to actively engage scientists, policy makers, youth and other stakeholder groups on water-related issues.

If you would like to partner with the
Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) for the convening of the
first-ever Caribbean Science Symposium on Water, e-mail us at:
info@gwp-caribbean.org.