



The Commonwealth



Summary

Debt-for-Climate Swaps Innovative Financial Instruments for Public Debt Management in the Caribbean

22 June 2021



Regional Collaboration Centre – St. George's
Promoting Action Against Climate Change



NDC PARTNERSHIP

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Background

The world is facing a triple crisis of debt, climate change and biodiversity loss. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic system have increased volatility in developing country markets, where high levels of debt make them vulnerable. The pandemic could severely undermine current responses to these crises, which were already inadequate to address their scale. Systemic change is urgently needed to support debt sustainability through the pandemic and to ensure consistent and long-term progress towards tackling these interconnected and complex global challenges¹.

Belize is now considering debt swaps as an important solution to manage mounting public debts, climate change challenges and COVID-19 recovery. Traditionally, these instruments represent an exchange of the existing debt contract with a new one, where the previous contract is normally “written down” or discounted. The discount or foregone debt service proceeds would then be used in an agreed upon manner usually to fund climate or environmental projects.

Climate change impacts experienced in Belize include sustained droughts, floods, increased coastal erosion and changing precipitation patterns. Combined, these phenomena significantly affect many environmental, physical, social and economic systems within the country. These adverse effects are expected to increase in the future, thereby threatening the physical and social infrastructure in Belize.

Belize’s annual average loss from wind-related events and floods averages just under US\$123 million, or 7 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This amount includes total direct and indirect losses to the public and private sector, on average in any given year over the long run. In 2019, Belize recorded a positive GDP growth during the first quarter, but drought contributed to a recession by the second half of the year. The COVID-19 pandemic gave no room for Belize’s economy to recover and by the end of December 2020, the public debt had risen to 125.5% of the GDP compared with 98% of GDP in 2019².

Tackling the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the Government of Belize to increase their health and pandemic response expenditure while facing a significant loss of revenue especially from the tourism sector. The dual impacts of climate change and the pandemic have exerted additional pressure on the country’s economy which is likely to heighten the country’s debt levels.

The Government of Belize had implemented a “Debt-for-Nature Swap” in 2001, however, as knowledge and capacity gaps have been identified, they are now attempting to bridge these gaps with the development of new expertise in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat. As a result, the Government of Belize has requested the Commonwealth Secretariat to aid the design and implementation of a “Debt for Climate/Nature Swap Mechanism” for the country covering the aspects of enhancing awareness and building capacities among stakeholders.

¹ Tackling the triple crisis Using debt swaps to address debt, climate and nature loss post-COVID-19, IIED Issue Paper, September 2020 <https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/16674IIED.pdf>

² Economic Update, March 2021, Ministry of Finance, Government of Belize

Key Messages and Outcomes

1. Consensus on the detrimental social, economic and environmental impacts climate change has had on the Caribbean region, particularly small island developing states (SIDS), which have been further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Understanding that debt swaps provide avenues for countries to increase fiscal space to develop and support climate adaptation and mitigation projects nationally, invest in sustainable human development and ensure economic resilience.
3. Recognition that adequate protection of land and marine areas, and fair management of and access to funds require government partnership, particularly Finance ministries, with the private sector and full transparency on processes associated with debt relief.
4. A call for increased and fast-track provision of global concessional funds and readiness support to developing countries through an accessible and sustainable finance architecture to deliver international financial assistance and debt relief.

Inauguration

The webinar commenced with the moderator, **Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of the Climate Change Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat**, welcoming all attendees and setting the context. This was then followed by a welcome address from the Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management for the Government of Belize.

Hon. Orlando Habet, Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, Government of Belize began his welcome address by thanking the Commonwealth Secretariat for organizing the event. He asserted that the involvement and engagement of the Ministry of Finance is crucial to ensuring the design and implementation of effective and appropriate financial recovery mechanisms that will help countries to build back better. He noted that the webinar is occurring at an opportune time when Belize is facing multiple challenges related to COVID-19, setbacks in resilient economic recovery and the incremental adverse effects in climate change.

Minister Habet highlighted that due to the negative impact of the increased debt burden on economies in the region, there have been challenges to investing resources towards climate action. He added that debt swaps are a viable option to explore and emphasised the importance of obtaining the most updated information for evidence-based decision making.

The Minister continued by extending a warm welcome to all the event participants attending from all around the world, an indication of the importance of and interest in debt swaps. He expressed gratitude to the panel members and speakers, recognizing that the knowledge and expertise will be a driving force for Belize, as well as the Caribbean region, to move forward with innovative climate financial strategies.

Minister Habet concluded by noting that the webinar would not be an isolated event, but an important starting point to address multiple developmental and environmental challenges. He believed it would be a catalyst for Belize and other countries in the region to make informed policy decisions towards innovative climate actions. He declared the webinar officially open by urging all participants to actively engage in the dialogue and to contribute towards achieving the event objectives.

Hon. Christopher Coye, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Investment, Government of Belize began his opening remarks by thanking the Commonwealth Secretariat for supporting the government and people of Belize to better prepare for and take advantage of Climate Finance opportunities such as Debt Swaps. He anticipated that the panellists would shed light on previous debt-for-nature arrangements as well as insight into lessons learned and current available mechanisms.

Small developing and vulnerable countries like Belize are on the verge of being overwhelmed by the dual economic and climate crises of unsustainable debt and adverse climate change effects. Minister Coye indicated that, in the last decade, “Belize was the only country in Central America to have registered a decline in real GDP growth as it was continually and disproportionately ravaged by ever more frequent natural disasters...” He added that Belize’s estimated annual losses due to extreme climate events is just under 7% of GDP, and due to the pandemic, Belize’s debt-to-GDP ratio was elevated to an unsustainable 130%.

Minister Coye shifted the tone by stating that even though climate finance offered a ray of hope, he reminded participants of the importance of being fully educated before making any decisions that will bring about meaningful impact in the present and long-term future. He added that, often, the key objective of swaps is the protection of large terrestrial or marine biodiversity zones and warned that the sectors’ natural resources may be restricted in exchange for converting debt payment from foreign to local currency. He underlined that focusing on the acquisition and management costs associated with protecting areas may overshadow the cost associated with the human development opportunities for which alternative plans need to be funded and developed to address resource loss.

Minister Coye concluded by reiterating the need to be fully informed on relevant factors, costs and implications associated to avoid outcomes that result in more costs than benefits for the country. He stressed that Belize needs debt relief, climate resiliency and sustainable human development, and that the country requires flexibility to optimize trust funds generated from swaps to build human capacity, competency and ensure sustainable human development for true resilience.

Dr Arjoon Suddhoo, Deputy Secretary General of The Commonwealth began the keynote address by reminding participants that climate change is the most critical global challenge impacting all levels of society, risking the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of our member states, particularly in countries that have been experiencing frequent and intensified climate induced extreme weather events causing significant damages to the lives, livelihoods, and socioeconomic systems.

Reiterating that the COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted the economies of the small and vulnerable Caribbean countries already affected by climate change, Dr Suddhoo highlighted that Belize, in 2019, due to historical drought and in 2020 by COVID-19 pandemic experienced a plummet in GDP growth from 3% to -14%. Public debt levels have also surpassed 100% of the GDP. Financial instruments such as debt swaps can address public debt levels and provide countries with resources to build climate resilience.

Dr. Suddhoo urged that the Commonwealth Secretariat, with its Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH), continues to support member states with human and institutional capacity building enabling them to unlock finance for climate action. In addition, the Secretariat’s Debt Management Unit, through its public debt management programme, will continue to support member countries’ efforts to effectively manage their debt portfolios through advisory support, capacity building and the provision of innovative debt management systems like Commonwealth Meridian.

He concluded by stating that the Commonwealth Secretariat is honoured to join hands with the Government of Belize to co-host this event to provide valuable insights to governments, climate fund, other donors and partners to move forward with impactful next steps.

Lessons from Belize's 2001 Debt-for-Nature Swap

Mr. Edilberto Romero, The Executive Director, Programme for Belize provided a background on the rapid deforestations and degradation rates, high external debt and financial crisis which Belize faced prior to the 2001 elections, after which the new government targeted resources to alleviate external debt and facilitate the conservation, restoration, protection, and sustainable use and management of rainforests.

He explained that Belize's debt-for-nature swap was achieved through three agreements and associated conditions: (i) Governments of Belize and USA which liquidated USAID loans totaling US \$8.5M, (ii) US government and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) where the U.S. made Debt Reduction payments of US \$5.542M, and (iii) Forest Conservation Agreement among multiple partners, including the Government of Belize, TNC and NGOs aimed to promote rainforest conservation. The Belize's 2001 Debt-for-Nature Swap was governed by seven members consisting of representatives from Government of Belize, Government of USA, Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT), The Nature Conservancy, and Belize NGOs who oversee the approval of budgets, rules and regulations of the Oversight Committee and the approval of the Process and PACT Foundation Establishment.

The major challenges faced were associated with, but not limited to, the agreement on the beneficiaries and disbursement of funds, establishment of the PACT Foundation, and size of the loan and endowment fund. The benefits of the swap included US\$8.5M forgiven, conservation of over 300,000 acres of rainforest, disbursement of 48 grants for protected areas management, and four endowment funds which will continue to finance protected areas in perpetuity. He concluded by encouraging government partnership and fair management of the fund and would advise for a larger debt-for-climate fund.

Experiences from Antigua and Barbuda on Designing a Debt-for-Climate Swap Mechanism

Mr. Michai Robertson, Policy Officer, Department of Environment, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda shed light on the typical stages required for debt swaps including the partial cancellation of eligible debt by the creditor entity, repurposing of the remaining debt, and then the transfer into local currency. The debt-for-climate swap is a restructuring of debt for an agreed purpose of transitioning to a low emission, climate resilient economy through two avenues: climate adaptation/mitigation projects and creation of fiscal space; of which, the latter allows countries to nationally address and recover from impacts of climate change.

He continued by recognising that climate change, public debt and the pandemic create a triple threat to long term stability of Caribbean SIDS and reduces government ability to invest in climate adaptation and mitigation projects and loss damage response. He pinpointed the importance of debt-for-climate swaps as an avenue to offset high debt-to-GDP ratios and interest payments, contraction, and high levels of public debt such as in the case for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda with an average debt-to-GDP ratio of 115.3% between 1998-2009. In 2020, the country experienced a contraction of 20.2% in comparison with an annual GDP growth of 4.9% in 2019.

Echoing the previous presentation, debt-for-climate swaps can ease the country's external debt obligations and strengthen its adaptive capacity, achieves SDGs 13 and 16, and support COVID-19 responses by redirecting finance to green recovery. He concluded by providing a status on the measures Antigua and Barbuda have taken to enhance access to climate finance whereby, as of August 2020, the country is making use of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness Programme to support the preparatory activities of a debt-for-climate swap.

Lessons from the Ongoing Implementation of Debt-for-Nature Swap in The Seychelles

Mr. Patrick Payet, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Investment, Government of Seychelles expounded on the issues The Seychelles faced leading up to their debt-for-climate swap including economic vulnerability and high impact of climate hazards which affected the tourism and fisheries sectors. Seychelles committed to dedicate 30% of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) to marine protected areas (MPAs), and the income generated from the debt swap would be used to create sustainable funding to manage MPAs through a landmark agreement among Government of Seychelles, Paris Club, and Government of South Africa.

In 2015, the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT), established to facilitate the debt-for-nature swap, was tasked with ensuring impact investors are repaid and the Blue Grants and Endowment Funds are managed. Seychelles' debt-for-climate-adaptation swap refinanced their debt by providing TNC with a US\$21.6M capital loan and \$5M in grants to buy-back \$29.6M of the country's debt at 5.4% discount. The redirected debt service payments to SeyCCAT were dedicated to repaying impact investors, capitalise on endowment and advance marine and coastal conservation. As a result, conservation activities were funded by an estimated US\$13M, 70% of which is payable in local currency, averting conversion costs.

Enabling Conditions to Structure a Debt Conversion

Mr. Robert Weary, CEO/Founder of Aqua Blue Investments, who worked in The Nature Conservancy for twenty-two years on debt conversions, and supported the 2001 Belize and 2015 Seychelles debt swaps, centred his presentation on the enabling factors to scale up debt conversions. Debt swaps emerged in the 1980s during the Latin American debt crisis where the US government cancelled debt for seven countries in the region. The two types of swaps are commercial/private – owed to banks, and bilateral – owed to government.

Mr. Weary presented a detailed organogram of debt restructuring underway in Latin America which encompasses a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) as a stand-alone entity to execute the transaction and help manage the Conservation Trust Fund. The commercial bank will issue the green/blue bond and support the SPV and government in sourcing the commercial debt for conversion. The bonds will be derisked with political risk insurance policy provided by a Development Finance Corporation (DFC), at a low interest rate to purchase debt off the market. The government gains savings in the form of write-offs and interest rate reduction. With the new debt structure, the commercial loan is repaid, and conservation cash flow will go to a conservation cash fund and endowment fund, the latter serving as a funding mechanism for investment returns and pay outs.

Activities that can be funded through this debt structuring, Mr. Weary identified, include management of marine reserves, coral and mangrove restoration, improving marine, fisheries and coastal policies, economic diversification, climate resiliency of coastal

communities. Mr. Weary ended his intervention with the benefits of debt conversions to the government ranging from redirection of external debt service for investments in-country, potential savings in debt write off and interest not paid, and eligibility of government entities for funding from debt conversion proceeds. For a successful debt swap, patience, high level commitment and broad stakeholder consensus are some of the key requirements.

A Scenario Analysis of the ECLAC Debt-for-Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative

Mr. Sheldon McLean, Coordinator, Economic Development Unit, Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) presented a case for Caribbean debt initiative by examining the high public debt and low growth conundrum following the global financial crisis. The region's debt had increased to 68% per GDP at the end of 2019, and 95% of GDP at the end of 2020. With most of Caribbean economies having high debt to GDP ratios, the region's growth had contracted by over 8% at the end of 2020.

He added that the major challenges facing the region include macroeconomic balances, insufficient productivity and competitiveness, and human development and environmental challenges. In 2017, UNECLAC estimated that damage and loss to Caribbean countries due to the hurricane season amounted to US \$93B. The recent eruption of La Soufriere volcano in St. Vincent estimated upward of US \$300M in damages. These events strengthen the case for the establishment of a Caribbean resilience fund to tackle debt, climate finance, and green growth.

By highlighting that the heterogeneity of debt requires tailor-made debt reduction scenarios, Mr. McLean proposed a scenario analysis which revealed the negative relationship between debt and growth. As a result, by using a long-term elasticity of debt on growth of 0.081 to determine that a total debt reduction of 12.2% in the region's debt stock, a minimum of 1% increase in long term growth can be achieved. Based on these theoretical simulations, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines were piloted as Phase I countries for the debt swaps.

He delved into the proposal of a Caribbean Resilience Fund (CRF) which, as a segregated portfolio Trust Fund aimed at ensuring the delineation of funds for debt reduction from resources meant for enhancing climate resilience, focuses on three thematic areas: resilience building, growth and competitiveness, and liquidity and debt sustainability. He closed with the mechanics of establishing and operationalising a CRF, how it may attract investments and result in job creation and climate and economic resilience. UNECLAC aims to take the CRF proposal forward through high-level consultations and collaborations for endorsement and adoption across the region.

3-party Funding Mechanism for Debt Relief and Climate Action Support in Developing Countries

Mr. Andrey Chicherin, Head of Innovation, Technology and Co-funding Platforms, Green Climate Fund presented a proposed debt-for-climate mechanism for developing countries aimed at facilitating effective continuation of funding to address climate vulnerabilities and low-emission development, mitigation and adaptation finance, and the acute economic consequences of COVID-19 pandemic.

The 3-party mechanism comprises of the developed country (creditor) and developing country (borrower) linked by an unsustainable sovereign loan which is then intercepted by the GCF through a 3-party Assignment Agreement whereby the existing indebtedness is transferred to the capital of the GCF as a contribution of the creditor which then becomes the financial resource available to support mitigation and adaptation projects in the developing country. The funds committed to project support may be utilised in the foreign currency or converted to the local currency of the developing countries.

Mr. Chicherin underlined that funding from the proposed debt-for-climate mechanism provides co-benefits among the 3 parties such as financial support for climate change projects and optimal use of financial assets for developed countries, additional resources for sustainable development and decreased levels of hard currency indebtedness for developing countries, and for the GCF, decreased risks for project financial infrastructure and alignment of developing country interests with GCF project support. In future implementation scenarios being designed by the GCF, Mr. Chicherin closed by introducing the possibility of a private sector creditor.

Mr. Vintura Silva, Regional Lead, UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre St. George's wrapped up this session of the webinar by reiterating the relevance and usefulness of the debt-for-climate swap as a tool to recover from the economic deteriorations due to the pandemic. At the junction of the implementations of updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and long-term low emission strategies for the Caribbean Region, countries that are debt burdened would look to debt relief and funding and will consider the suitability of a debt swap to their national financial and sustainable development strategy. Mr. Silva stressed the need to countries to assess the scope of the debt swap against their national development priorities to determine how to make best use of the tool.

Key Points of Discussion

1. In the case of the 2001 Belize debt-for-nature swap, how did forgone taxes impact the government's approach to revenue collection?

Edilberto Romero: The protected areas funded through the debt-for-nature swap were mostly government/state owned, and as such, are not required to pay taxes or had property tax exemption to avoid taxing the use of funds for protected areas management. The only case whereby property tax was given up by the government was in the purchase of 23,000 acres of forest land.

2. What is the status of the discussions with Paris Club creditors?

Michai Robertson: There seems to be general interest in debt-for-climate swaps. The GCF is included in the discussions, so it is very much a collaboration of the three partners. We continue to push forward and hope for the best.

3. Comparing Multilateral vs Bilateral Debt, which type is being successfully swapped? What are the successes like with multilateral creditors like the WorldBank?

Robert Weary: The deals that I am currently working on are targeting commercial debt, which trades on the market. This allows us to know exactly what the discounted price is. Negotiations with bi-lateral creditors in places like the Paris Club, like what we did

for Seychelles are another option. Of note, multi-laterals are unable to sell their debt at a discount, per their own rules, so this would take this debt off the table as an option.

4. Would you consider using an existing Trust Fund?

Robert Weary: Yes, an existing Trust Fund could work if it is majority non-government on the Board, per best management practices for Conservation Trust Funds.

5. Is debt forgiveness, rather than a swap more effective? In a swap a government may still have to pay off debt, albeit on different terms.

Pamella McLaren: Debt forgiveness is more effective as in most instances the government is relieved from servicing the debt and it will result in a reduction of the stock of debt outstanding.

6. To the extent that a significant portion of the domestic debt in the region and in countries is held with the financial institutions, how would such swaps be put into effect without affecting their balance sheets and creating financial instability.

Robert Weary: In pricing debt, there is a formula that considers the maturity of the debt, interest rate and discount value. Depending on the discount value, it will give a net present value of that future cash flow, e.g. for the Seychelles debt conversion negotiated in the Paris Club, a net present value formula was used to price the debt and get a discount. This is also done for debt traded on the market whereby creditors calculate current values of future cash flow which is said debt. In the case of countries in which debt is held by a financial institution, the starting point would be to do the present value calculation to determine the value of the debt for negotiation with the creditor. What drives the value of debt is the belief that the creditor will receive their principal amount and interest; what drives the price down is the belief that they won't.

7. How are the ecological areas that are proposed for debt swaps valued, particularly in EEZs where there are many unknown resources under the sea. Is there a possibility of undervaluing our assets and the amount of debt that can be restructured?

Robert Weary: In the case of Seychelles, where <0.1% of their EEZs were within marine protected areas, TNC provided technical support to conduct a marine spatial plan which was science-based, stakeholder-driven involving the tourism sector, fisheries, conservation sector, among other parties over a 4 year period. As a result, the government and stakeholders agreed on the locations of the marine protected areas.

8. Will countries be able to work with the Green Climate Fund if they do not have Direct Access Entities (DAEs), if so, what is the proposed mechanism?

Andrey Chicherin: In addition to DAEs, there are International Access Entities (IAEs) who are partners of the GCF delivering impactful projects. The basis of debt-for-climate swaps on the basis of IAEs is open and is welcomed by the GCF.

9. While swaps have worked well in many cases, is there a basic problem that should be addressed by funding from OECD rather than indebted developing countries?

Sheldon McLean: In discussion with some of the International Finance Institutions (IFIs), it was found that there is little debt forgiveness or debt reduction. With the impact of the pandemic, which has amassed high debt, climate vulnerability and economic vulnerability of the Caribbean member states, we believe we need a pool of funds to

address the elements of climate adaptation, build resilience, diversify Caribbean economies, and address structural challenges and infrastructure gaps. In addition, to reduce the region's debt which has constrained the fiscal space for member states to invest in economic resilience, a sustainable debt swap is necessary.

Closing Remarks and Way Forward

Dr. Lennox Gladden, Chief Climate Change Officer, National Climate Change Office, Government of Belize, in thanking participants for attending the session, reiterated earlier sentiments on the need to strike a balance when addressing nature conservation and human development, the importance of knowledge sharing and awareness building, and evidenced-based decision making and policy formation based on science and concrete results. Dr. Gladden emphasized that partnering with the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNFCCC, and NDC Partnership illustrated the strengths of collaboration among stakeholders to achieve resilience.

Dr. Ruth Kattumuri, Senior Director, Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat closed the event by expressing gratitude to the member countries – Belize, The Seychelles, and Antigua and Barbuda – for presenting their country experiences and exploring the requirements, partnerships, effectiveness, procedures and challenges in implementing debt swaps and an understanding of the next steps required to design and implement effective programmes on debt swaps.

Developing country debt exceeded US\$8 trillion by the end of 2019 and global debt was worsened by the pandemic. She added that the debt burden, coupled with limited access to concessional financing, has hindered the achievement of the global climate change commitments including the Paris Agreement targets. There is growing interest and innovation in financial models with the perspectives that increasing the use of debt swaps would benefit the lender, private creditors and governments.

She underscored that the Commonwealth will continue to step up its advocacy - building on its long history of dedicated and sustained support on climate action and debt management. The Secretariat's support will align to the internationally endorsed multilateral/bilateral funds pledged for climate finance in indebted countries to purchase debt, meaning that funds allocated to servicing the debt will instead be used for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. This model is part of a suite of support measures and innovations provided by the Secretariat through its Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH).

Dr. Kattumuri closed by reiterating that debt swaps can provide much needed financing for a lasting green, post-pandemic recovery and can fund climate resilience, disaster preparedness and green recovery initiatives. This innovative finance model can be an effective weapon in the fight to preserve and protect our planet and people in one of the world's most vulnerable geographical areas. She expressed that the Secretariat looks forward to continued engagement with the region and welcomes the contributions from institutional experts and technical agencies to initiate collaborations thereby developing instruments to manage public debt.

ANNEX I: Agenda

Topic and Speakers	Timing (BST)
<p>The Inauguration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Address by <i>Hon. Orlando Habet</i> The Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, Government of Belize • Opening Remarks by <i>Hon. Christopher Coye</i> Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Investment, Government of Belize • Keynote Address by <i>Dr Arjoon Suddhoo</i> The Deputy Secretary General of The Commonwealth 	15:00-15:15 (15 mins)
<p>An Introduction to Principles and Models of Debt-for-Climate/Nature Swaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair</i>, Head of Climate Change, The Commonwealth Secretariat 	15:15-15:25 (10 mins)
<p>Country Experiences on Debt for Climate/Nature Swaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons from Belize’s 2001 Debt-for-Nature Swap <i>Mr. Edilberto Romero</i>, The Executive Director, Programme for Belize • Experiences from Antigua and Barbuda on Designing a Debt-for-Climate Swap Mechanism <i>Mr. Michai Robertson</i>, Policy Officer, Department of Environment, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda • Lessons from the Ongoing Implementation of Debt-for-Nature Swap in The Seychelles <i>Mr. Patrick Payet</i>, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Investment, Government of Seychelles 	15:25-15:55 (30 mins)
<p>Facilitated Q&A Discussion Moderated by <i>Mrs. Pamela McLaren</i> - Adviser and Head, Debt Management Section, The Commonwealth Secretariat</p>	15:55-16:05 (10 mins)
<p>Opportunities and Way Forward for the Caribbean Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling Conditions to Structure a Debt Conversion <i>Mr. Robert Weary</i> - Former Deputy Director of The Nature Conservancy, Chief Executive Officer of Aqua Blue Investments • A Scenario Analysis of the ECLAC Debt-for-Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative <i>Mr. Sheldon McLean</i> - Coordinator, Economic Development Unit, Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean • Debt-for-Climate: 3-party Funding Mechanism for Debt Relief and Climate Action Support in Developing Countries <i>Mr. Andrey Chicherin</i> - Head of Innovation, Technology and Co-funding Platforms, Green Climate Fund <p>Discussant: <i>Mr. Vintura Silva</i> - Head of UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre for the Caribbean</p>	16:05-16:40 (35 mins)
<p>Facilitated Q&A Discussion Moderated by <i>Mrs. Pamela McLaren</i> - Adviser and Head, Debt Management Section, The Commonwealth Secretariat</p>	16:40-16:50 (10 mins)
<p>Closing Remarks and Way Forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Lennox Gladden, Chief Climate Change Officer, National Climate Change Office, Government of Belize • Dr. Ruth Kattumuri, Senior Director, Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, The Commonwealth Secretariat 	16:50-17:00 (10 mins)
<p>Event Moderator: <i>Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair</i>, Head of Climate Change, The Commonwealth Secretariat</p>	

ANNEX II: Event Photo Collage



Hon. Orlando Habet
Minister of Sustainable
Development, Climate Change and
Disaster Risk Management,
Government of Belize providing the
welcome address



Hon. Christopher Coye
Minister of State in the Ministry
of Finance Economic
Development and Investment,
Government of Belize offering
opening remarks



Dr Arjoon Suddhoo, Deputy
Secretary General of The
Commonwealth giving the
keynote address



Panellists presenting on country experiences (L-R): Mr. Edilberto Romero, The Executive Director, Programme for Belize; Mr. Michai Robertson, Policy Officer, Department of Environment, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda; and Mr. Patrick Payet, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Investment, Government of Seychelles



Panellists presenting opportunities and a way forward for the Caribbean (L-R): Mr. Robert Weary, Former Deputy Director of The Nature Conservancy, Chief Executive Officer of Aqua Blue Investments; Mr. Sheldon McLean, Coordinator, Economic Development Unit, Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC); and Mr. Andrey Chicherin, Head of Innovation, Technology and Co-funding Platforms, Green Climate Fund (GCF)



Discussant: Mr. Vintura Silva
Regional Lead, UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre St. George's



Closing remarks and Way Forward provided by: Dr. Lennox Gladden, Chief Climate Change Officer, National Climate Change Office, Government of Belize; and Dr. Ruth Kattumuri, Senior Director, Economic Youth and Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat



Moderators (L-R): Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change and Mrs. Pamella McLaren, Adviser and Head, Debt Management Section, The Commonwealth Secretariat

ANNEX III: List of Participants

Speakers

- Dr. Arjoon Suddhoo, The Deputy Secretary General of The Commonwealth
- Hon. Orlando Habet, The Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, Government of Belize
- Hon. Christopher Coxe, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Investment, Government of Belize
- Mr. Patrick Payet, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Investment, Government of Seychelles
- Dr. Ruth Kattumuri, Senior Director, Economic Youth and Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Dr. Lennox Gladden, Chief Climate Change Officer, National Climate Change Office, Government of Belize
- Mr. Edilberto Romero, The Executive Director, Programme for Belize
- Mr. Robert Weary - Former Deputy Director of The Nature Conservancy, Chief Executive Officer of Aqua Blue Investments
- Mr. Sheldon McLean, Coordinator, Economic Development Unit, Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Mr. Andrey Chicherin, Head of Innovation, Technology and Co-funding Platforms, Green Climate Fund (GCF)
- Mr. Michai Robertson, Policy Officer, Department of Environment, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda
- Mr. Vintura Silva, Regional Lead, UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre St. George's
- Mr. Unnikrishnan Nair, Head of Climate Change, The Commonwealth Secretariat
- Mrs. Pamela McLaren, Adviser & Head, Debt Management Section, Commonwealth Secretariat

Guests

- Abdullahi Abdulkadri - United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)
- Ahnivar Peralta - Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)
- Amlicke Noelle
- Anura Dissanayaka - Housing Development Finance Corporation Bank of Sri Lanka
- Asham Hodge - Government of Anguilla
- Audrey Grant - Government
- Ayesha Borland - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belize
- Belinda Bramley - Blue Green Future
- Catherine Cuffy - Ministry of Finance, Government of Dominica
- Chintamani Sookoo - Ministry of Finance, Trinidad and Tobago
- Cindy Nguyen - Islands Energy Program, Rocky Mountain Institute, RMI
- Crystal Drakes - Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies
- Damien Reeves - Caribbean Development Bank
- Daniel Ortiz - Tropical Vision Ltd., 7Newsbelize.com
- Daryll Griffith - Green Intelligence Business Solutions Ltd
- Derek Gibbs - Caribbean Development Bank
- Deserie Pascal-Lander - Ministry of Finance, Government of Dominica
- Dev Useeree - Debt Markets & Public Financial Management
- Diane Quarless - United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Dianne Ramdeen - Quartic Training
- Dillon Alleyne - United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Donna Kaidou Jeffrey - Caribbean Development Bank

- Donna Yearwood - Ministry of Finance, Government of Guyana
- Donnell Cain - Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)
- Duane Moody - Great Belize Production Ltd./News 5
- Duchess Williams-Alonga - Bahamas Host Association & Commonwealth Countries League
- Eeleni Komal - Ministry of Finance, Government of Guyana
- Ezra Christopher - Department of Environment, Antigua and Barbuda
- Franklyn Magloire - Development Finance Corporation, Belize
- Gail Imhoff-Gordon - Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance, Antigua & Barbuda
- Garth Simon - Department of Environment
- George Cummings - The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation
- Gina Young - Belize National Climate Change Office
- Hugh Sealy - Government of Barbados
- Ingrid C Richardson - Ministry of Finance, Government of Anguilla
- Jaabari Reynolds - Department of Environment, Antigua& Barbuda
- Jair Santoya - Central Bank of Belize
- Jasmine Tzul-Faber - REDD+ Belize
- Jennifer Park - United Nations Secretary - General's Climate Team
- Josanne Hansraj - Ministry of Finance, Trinidad and Tobago
- Joth Singh, Programme Manager, Ecosystem-based Adaptation Facility, Caribbean Biodiversity Fund
- Juan Ramirez - PPF Capital Belize Ltd.
- Judene Tingling Linares - National Biodiversity Office
- Julie Robinson - The Nature Conservancy
- Julietta Edinborough - Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
- Kareem Reynolds - Belize National Climate Change Office
- Katherine Blackman - United Nations
- Kevin Hope - Caribbean Development Bank
- Kimisha Thomas - Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment
- Kris Anderson - 3GIMBALS
- Lisa Henderson - Ministry of Finance & the Public Service, Government of Jamaica
- Luis Balan
- Maxsalia Salmon - United Nations Resident Coordinator Office
- Mercedes Carcamo - REDD+ Belize/ National Climate Change Office
- Michael Hendrickson, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean
- Michele Phillips - Government of the Virgin Islands (British)
- Muriel Guiste-Stuart - Government of Dominica
- Nathan Woodley - Satellite Applications Catapult
- Nicole Francis - Government of Antigua & Barbuda
- Niranjana Sarangi - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
- Nyasha Hamilton - Sustainable Development Unit, St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Nyasha Skerrette - Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean
- Olafde Groot - United Nations
- Orville Grey - Green Climate Fund
- Peggy McLennan - The World Bank
- Princess Hepburn - Ministry of Finance and the Public Service
- Ramin Takin - Cambridge University RSDP
- Rawlestone Moore - Independent Consultant
- Raymond Prasad - The UN Resident Coordinator Office, Trinidad & Tobago
- Rebecca Bell - Global Affairs Canada
- Rene Nunez - Ministry of Finance - Government of Belize
- Rhesa Findley - Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
- Rickardo Ward - Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy

- Rubyann Smith - Accountant
- Sandra Brewley - Government of the Virgin Islands
- Sandria Haase - Ministry of Finance & the Public Service - Government of Jamaica
- Sarah Aoanan - Nova Impact
- Saul Cruz - National Biodiversity Office, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management
- Sebastien Espinosa - White Oak Advisory
- Seth George Ramocan - Jamaican High Commission
- Shivon Burton - Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
- Sidney Jules - Rocky Mountain Institute, RMI
- Sondra Cheong - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Guyana
- Stacey Ann - Private organisation
- Stephanie Toolsie - Ministry of Finance, Trinidad and Tobago
- Stephanie Toolsie Maier - Caribbean Development Bank
- Sumeet Betancourt - National Climate Change Office, REDD+ Readiness Project, Belize
- Susi Menazza - The Nature Conservancy
- Tash Van Doimen - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Guyana
- Titus Antoine - Government of Grenada
- Ulrike Krauss - Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF)
- Valencia Bain - GOBH - Treasury Department

Commonwealth Secretariat

- Bilal Anwar - General Manager - Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH)
- Ranga Pallawala - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Belize
- Kai Kim Chiang - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Seychelles
- Katherine Cooke - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Fiji
- Winston Bennett - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Barbados
- Sasha Jattansingh - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Antigua & Barbuda
- Diana Hinge - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Vanuatu
- Martin Barriteau - Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Tonga
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- Ms. Uzoamaka Nwamarah - Adviser, Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat
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