

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Projects and Initiatives in the Caribbean

Title: Participatory research to enhance climate change policy and institutions in the Caribbean: ARIA Pilot Tool

Organisation: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

Aims and Objectives:

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), in collaboration with the World Resource Institute (WRI) and the St. Lucia National Trust (SLNT) is implementing a project in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago to increase civil society engagement in policy and institutional analysis for climate change adaptation. The goal of this project is to build understanding of effective climate change adaptation policy, institutions and actions and improve capacity for participatory climate change policy design and adaptation.

This project has pioneered the use of the WRI's Adaptation: Rapid Institutional Analysis (ARIA) toolkit in the Caribbean. In essence, the ARIA toolkit is an indicator-based survey of existing policies and practices that can be applied by civil society organizations to their national situations. Use of the ARIA toolkit will enhance access to environmental information, public participation and access to justice in national-level climate change adaptation. In addition, it will improve the quality of adaptive actions by the Governments of St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, the private sector and citizens.

Duration: Start Year: 2013 Completion Year: 2014

Additional Comments:

Estimated Cost (USD): \$90,000

Funding Source: Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CKDN)

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Key Words: Climate Change Adaptation; Policy and Practice; Civil Society; ARIA Toolkit; Capacity Building

Geographic Coverage: St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago

Sectoral Focus: The following priority areas were identified for focused research:

- Food Security;
- Water Resources;
- Livelihoods and Culture;
- Coastal Zone; and
- Tourism.

Target Beneficiaries: The project should improve the quality of adaptive actions by the Governments of St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, the private sector and citizens.

Outputs:

The project involved the following activities:

- Two-day workshops in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago among research partners
- Establishment of a Regional Advisory Panel to set the direction for priority areas for research
- National workshops in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago for building capacity of other NGOs to administer the ARIA tool
- National surveys using the ARIA tool in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago
- Research in three priority areas in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago
- Communication of results
- Evaluating the pilot and identifying recommendations for refining the process
- Preparation of workshops reports, reporting of ARIA results, policy briefs (available at the project website)

Project Links and References: <http://www.canari.org/ccddr7.asp>
<http://cdkn.org/project/enhancing-climate-change-policy-caribbean-aria-pilot-tool/>

Impacts:

Expected impact:

Ultimately, the work carried out during the course of this project will contribute to improving the capacity of these two nations to implement effective climate change adaptation policy and action.

Although it is too early to report on its wider impacts, the project has built the capacity of civil society to assess and understand the institutional arrangements for climate change adaptation. Further, the uptake of this capacity and the resulting knowledge into government policy is limited as the project is still wrapping up. The plan for influencing policy is not clear but involves a wide dissemination of the findings to government agencies.

Sustainability:

Potential limitations to the sustainability of the project include the following:

- Although the ARIA project aims to provide tools to support civil society's influence on policy, the broader policymaking environment is generally top down. This environment makes it difficult to leverage influence from a civil society standpoint since it is outside the control of civil society organisations.
- Policy briefs have been developed for use by non-climate change specialist in civil societies to gain the information needed to advocate change.

Outcomes which may potentially enhance sustainability include the following:

- Government representatives have shown a strong interest in the project outcomes. Their awareness of the project has resulted in CANARI being invited to a government workshop (Institute of Marine Affairs) on the recently acquired Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) loan for coastal zone management.

Lessons for the Future:

The following recommendations for improving the process were identified:

- The setting up of an Advisory Panel at the beginning of the project to oversee project implementation, provide oversight review, to give a stronger sense of ownership and to champion the process. Such a panel was set up but only halfway through the project and it included high level regional and national representatives including the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). The Panel was important in giving the pilot project profile, especially with the CCCCC as an important regional champion.
- A more thorough stakeholder analysis at the start of the project would have helped to ensure a broader stakeholder base during the pilot project which in turn could have supported the uptake and use of the research findings.

Opportunities Arising from the Project:

Potential actions for upscaling and replication include:

- A regional workshop on ARIA would help to stimulate interest in the tool
- A regional helpdesk could be used to support its implementation by expanding on existing capacity built during the pilot phase.
- A committee of civil society organisations across the region would also help to shape and maintain interest in the application of the tool by civil society.
- Developing a handbook to support the use of ARIA thus reducing the need for specialist input although some level of hands on training will always be required. CANARI and the civil society organisations involved in the pilot will be the main source of this capacity
- Garnering the interest of major regional stakeholders such as CCCCC could catalyse interest and funding opportunities for a further roll out

Further Comments:

Information not available