

Climate Change Impacts on Coastal Transport Infrastructure in the Caribbean: Enhancing the Adaptive Capacity of Small Island Developing States Project

<http://unctadsftportal.org/unctad/unctadtechnicalassistanceprogrammesandactivities/climatechangeimpactsoneastcoastaltransportinfrastructureproject/>

UNCTAD, in cooperation with [UNEP](#), [ECLAC](#), and [UNDP](#), is currently implementing the project [“Climate change impacts on coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean: enhancing the adaptive capacity of small island developing States”](#) under the 9th Tranche of the UN Development Account.

Background and Objectives

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) share a number of socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities that challenge their growth and development aspirations. Their climate, location and geomorphology, as well as their reliance on coastal transport infrastructure, in particular seaports and airports, exacerbate these vulnerabilities, including their susceptibility to climate variability and change (CV&C) factors, such as sea-level rise and extreme weather events. At the same time, SIDS’ capacity to adapt and to build resilience of their coastal transport infrastructure is constrained. SIDS have limited financial and human resources to conduct targeted vulnerability studies, carry out cost assessments, and identify and prioritize requisite adaptation options.

Two issues are pervasive:

1. The lack of information/data at a downscaled local level
2. Insufficient cooperation and coordination of action at all levels

Building on UNCTAD’s related research and consensus building work, a United Nations Development Account funded project on [“Climate change impacts on coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean: enhancing the adaptive capacity of Small Island Developing States \(SIDS\)”](#) is currently being implemented.

The project — due to be completed at the end of 2017 — aims to strengthen the capacity of policy makers, transport planners and transport infrastructure managers in SIDS to:

- a. Understand climatic impacts on coastal transport infrastructure – in particular seaports and airports.
- b. Take appropriate adaptation response measures.

Project Activities

Case-studies focusing on two vulnerable SIDS in the Caribbean region (Jamaica and Saint Lucia) will be carried out to enhance the knowledge and understanding at the national level and to develop a methodology for assessing climate-related impacts and adaptation options in other SIDS.

The case-studies involve three main components:

1. An assessment of the potential climate change impacts on ports and airports in Jamaica and St. Lucia, their direct costs and broader economic impacts.
2. An assessment of options for adaptation in response to the potential impacts.
3. The development of a methodology/tool to assist transport infrastructure managers and other relevant entities in SIDS in assessing climate-related impacts and adaptation options regarding coastal transport infrastructure.

The methodology will be designed with a view to its transferability and replication in other SIDS across regions, subject to location-specific modifications.

The results of the study, including the methodology, will be reviewed and refined at an Expert Group meeting and, following the development of guidance/training material, will be presented at two national workshops for stakeholders in Jamaica and St. Lucia.

The national workshops will also serve to solicit further input, including on the methodology for assessing adaptation needs and priorities. So as to ensure significant multiplier effects, a regional workshop will be convened to present the insights gained as a result of the study, provide training in the methodology for assessing climate-related impacts and adaptation options and consider best practices/experiences.

In preparation for the regional workshop, relevant guidance and training materials will be developed.

For further information on UNCTAD's work in this area, please visit UNCTAD's Transport Policy and Legislation website: <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DTL/TTL/Legal/Climate-Change-Impacts-on-SIDS.aspx>