

Caribbean's Sun, Sea and Wind



When we think of the Caribbean's radiant sunlight, exotic seas and refreshing breeze we are automatically led to visualize stingily clad tourists scampering along beaches sipping coconut water. However, these remarkable Caribbean assets are not only the main driving force behind tourism, but they also play a key role in ensuring the growth and survival of the Caribbean region.

There have been widespread discourses surrounding climate change and its devastating effects. It is also a known fact that states Caribbean region are especially vulnerability to these effects

engineered by climate change. While we applaud the efforts that are being undertaken by our government officials to combat the effects of climate change, we are cognizant of the fact that more can be done in this regard. Presently, throughout our region, we are faced with exorbitant fuel prices for electricity and our demand for, and energy usages have caused irreversible harm to our environment and fostered climate change.

Luckily, the region is endowed with an abundant supply of water, wind and sunlight which are salient renewable energy sources. Like many, I strongly believe that the future of our region and sustained reductions in climate change is greatly dependent up on the effective harnessing of these energy sources. The usages of these renewable energy sources, unlike fossil fuels, do not pose any imminent threats to the environment or engender climate change. The successful undertaking of renewable energy projects will undoubtedly provide employment opportunities for scores of Caribbean nationals. Sure enough, this will assist in reducing the staggering rates of unemployment within the Caribbean, thereby fostering needed economic growth. These aforementioned renewable energy projects will also provide adequate energy needed by businesses in the region and reduce the Caribbean's unsavory dependence on foreign oil supplies. Most importantly, these energy sources, unlike others sources of energy, will never be depleted.

In an effort to reap the enormous benefits arising from renewable energy it is incumbent on policy- makers within our region to institute energy policies geared towards fostering sustainable renewable energy programs and projects and providing adequate financial support for renewable energy initiatives. Although Jamaica is lagging behind in this regard, I am proud to note that it was recently posited by Jamaica's Energy Minister, Phillip Paulwell that, under the Jamaican renewable energy policy Jamaican's are being afforded low interest rate loans "to enable them to

procure renewable energy systems, particularly for solar devices” by the Jamaican government. It is also of great importance that the Caribbean private sector begins exploring various lucrative renewable energy investment opportunities. In addition, Caribbean territories which are unable to provide the enormous amount of capital needed to undertake renewable energy initiatives should engage in sustainable partnerships with overseas private investors and developed nations.

The Caribbean region is fortunate to have unlimited supply of renewable energy sources at its disposal. Therefore, it is left up to us as nationals to effectively capitalize upon these invaluable sources in a prudent manner, in an effort to; preserve and protect our environment, foster economic and social growth and ensure reductions in climate change.

References

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