

## **Climate Change Education - unique linkages and opportunities between the Caribbean and CACCE**

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How do we create long-term mechanisms for the seamless integration of education, research, and outreach activities that link the coastal areas of the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico basin so that we create sustainable and healthy communities that are resilient to climate change impacts? Leaders from small island states and low lying coasts have played an important role in global climate change discussions, arguing their case that they are the most vulnerable to impacts due to things like isolation and limited resources. This vulnerability and urgency for solutions has, in many cases, positioned the islands and low lying coasts of the Caribbean as “test beds” for innovation needed for climate change adaptation. Financial support from Europe, Australia, Canada and Japan lead capacity building in the Caribbean on climate change related studies. These “test beds” do offer great opportunities for learning and innovation that can be translated to the US where implementation may not be as urgent, affordable, or easy. Recent US funding for the Caribbean related to climate change, especially the renewable energy portfolio, injects much needed resources to a region that already recognizes the importance of adaptation to climate change and that has put in place regional and national policies/strategies for dealing with this issue. This investment in the Caribbean is also occurring in the US where national research agendas are pushing for climate change education (e.g. CACCE) and for disciplines like engineering to address/incorporate climate change issues under themes of sustainability, resilience etc.. Also emerging is a seamless pathway for integration across the two basins that builds on the linkages of the large Caribbean diaspora population living in the US with organizations like the Caribbean Science Foundation, established to promote innovation in science and technology from places like MIT to UWI.