

Caribbean Nations Join International Movement to Protect 30% of Global Ecosystems by 2030

Over a dozen Caribbean nations, including Jamaica, Grenada, and Antigua & Barbuda have joined a progressive group of nations across the globe intent on protecting 30% of the planet's ocean and land resources by 2030. The 30x30 target, as it is known, is supported by science and advanced by the High Ambition Coalition for Nature & People (HAC) in a bid to fight the impacts of biodiversity loss, environmental degradation and climate change. The Caribbean is no stranger to these issues, it has shown ambition in advancing climate solutions and advocating for high biodiversity protection targets - and through support of the science backed 30x30 target the Caribbean region continues to showcase its leadership to the globe.

Globally, only 7% of oceans and 15% of land are designated as protected. In order to meet the goal, the HAC has been gathering pledges from global governments ahead of the signing of the official treaty in Kunming, China, later this year. The Coalition is co-chaired by Costa Rica and France, with the United Kingdom named as the Ocean co-chair. So far, over 85 nations have indicated their commitment to the science-backed 30x30 target including Canada, the Marshall Islands, the Maldives, and several of the European Union's member states. A full list of participating countries can be found [here](#).

The 30x30 goal is part of a larger sustainable development movement that includes the Global Ocean Alliance (GOA), a programme that specifically targets the creation of new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Several Caribbean countries have already sealed their commitment to the GOA. However, given the important connection between land and sea in the region, ensuring that land resources are simultaneously protected is just as crucial. The HAC has identified terrestrial protection as an important and undervalued conservation target. The protection of 30% of the planet would represent a range of benefits, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding 500 gigatonnes of carbon stored in vegetation and soils;
- Reducing the risk of zoonotic disease outbreaks like COVID-19;
- Supporting 30 million jobs and \$500b of GDP in ecotourism and sustainable fisheries;
- Restoring depleted fishing grounds and fish populations by 600%; and
- Increasing food security and improving local economies.

Biodiversity loss is one of the greatest systemic risks to the Caribbean nations' economies, and contributes to trillions of USD in storm damage, insurance claims and reduced crop productivity. Communities across the region are already witnessing these issues first hand. However, solutions are available. Advancing the 30x30 goal ensures that the Caribbean continues to build its resilience and safeguard the region for future generations.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), is now underway in Nairobi, Kenya and the CBD COP pre-session in Geneva, Switzerland is set to take place between March 14 and 29th, 2022. Both events are expected to serve as a catalyst for new Caribbean governments to join the fold, and highlight how the region can become a global role-model for both marine and land preservation. As it is a global goal, countries are not expected to all protect 30% of their land and water resources, but rather the amount that is ecologically and economically viable. For example large big-ocean states will be in a better position to protect a higher percentage of marine resources, while a coastal nation may be able to conserve equal amounts of land and ocean.

The 30 by 30 target is a global target, and it needs global cooperation. When these protected areas are taken into consideration along with those of the other 85+ nations participating, the goal of protecting the planet's oceans and land resources is easier to achieve. This is the primary goal of the HAC - collective commitments to secure a viable future for people and the planet.

Discussing the importance of the global 30x30 target for Caribbean nations, **Jamaican Minister Matthew Samuda** said: "Protecting our region's unique biodiversity is a must. We are a product of our environment - protecting our reefs, forests, coastal areas and other green spaces ensure that we are protecting ourselves as well as future generations. The latest IPCC report is clear, we must act now to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, and the HAC 30x30 target provides us with a pathway towards doing just that. Jamaica, and the Caribbean region as a whole, have advanced innovative sustainable solutions. We must lead as models of resilience and climate action, and by taking part in the 30x30 goal, we are leading by example and showcasing what the Caribbean can achieve. "

Discussing the importance of the global 30x30 target for the Caribbean region, **Grenada's Minister for Climate Resilience Simon Stiell** said: "It is vitally important for strong action to be taken in regards to the protection of our lands and seas. We have a small window in which to act to safeguard future generations. The science is clear, protecting 30% of our planet's natural areas by 2030 can have significant effects on mitigating climate change, as well as providing opportunities for local communities in the Caribbean to become more resilient and economically competent. Taking on climate change is a global challenge, and it needs global solutions and input. Caribbean countries like Grenada are no stranger to the impacts of a changing climate, and our communities have continually worked towards implementing sustainable solutions that would protect them for years to come. Taking on the 30x30 challenge ensures we are protecting our environment, our economy and our people, advancing strong action against climate change and securing a sustainable future."

Barbados' Minister of Environment, National Beautification and the Blue and Green Economy of Barbados Hon. Adrian Forde also endorsed the 30x30, saying: "Barbados is proud to be pursuing the 30x30 target alongside several other Caribbean nations. This target is one the region should take on together as its benefits will only compound and increase as other countries join and protect our natural resources. Being able to conserve our oceans and lands ensures that we continue to develop sustainably while building our resilience and adapting to the impacts of climate change. This is an important goal to reach for Barbados, the Caribbean, and the planet.

Together we can achieve many things, and we should see the 30x30 target as the first step towards a better future.”

For further information on the HAC, the 30 by 30 target, and how to participate, please visit:
<https://www.campaignfornature.org/take-action-1>

For further inquiries, please contact:

Vincent Diringer, Project Manager

Email: vincent@islandinnovation.co

WhatsApp: +44 74156 85775