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U.S. Helping Finance Project in Caribbean to Counter Global Warming

Climate-change project will aid 12 Caribbean nations

Washington -- The United States is helping finance a project in conjunction with the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF) to counter the destructive effects of global warming in the Caribbean.

The "Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change Project" will benefit 12 small island and low-lying countries in the region, the Bank said in an April 18 statement. Those countries are: Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Bank said that throughout the Caribbean region, global warming is expected to cause significant changes both in sea temperatures and sea levels, and to intensify extreme weather events such as floods, heavy rains, and hurricanes. As a result, both natural ecosystems and man-made projects will be at increased risk. The project helps Caribbean nations plan how to counteract these climate changes.

The project is being financed by a \$5-million grant from the GEF, to be administered by Caricom (the Caribbean Community trading bloc). That money is supplemented by grants of \$800,000 from the United States, \$2 million from Canada, and \$3.15 million from Caricom governments.

The United States is engaged in a number of other activities to protect the Caribbean. For instance, the U.S. Coast Guard-led federal Caribbean Regional Response Team in Puerto Rico provides oil-spill response and response-training capability to the wider Caribbean region, while the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration supports projects in fisheries and marine-protected areas.

Another initiative, the U.S.-led "White Water to Blue Water" partnership, supports the management of watersheds and marine ecosystems, with help from the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

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