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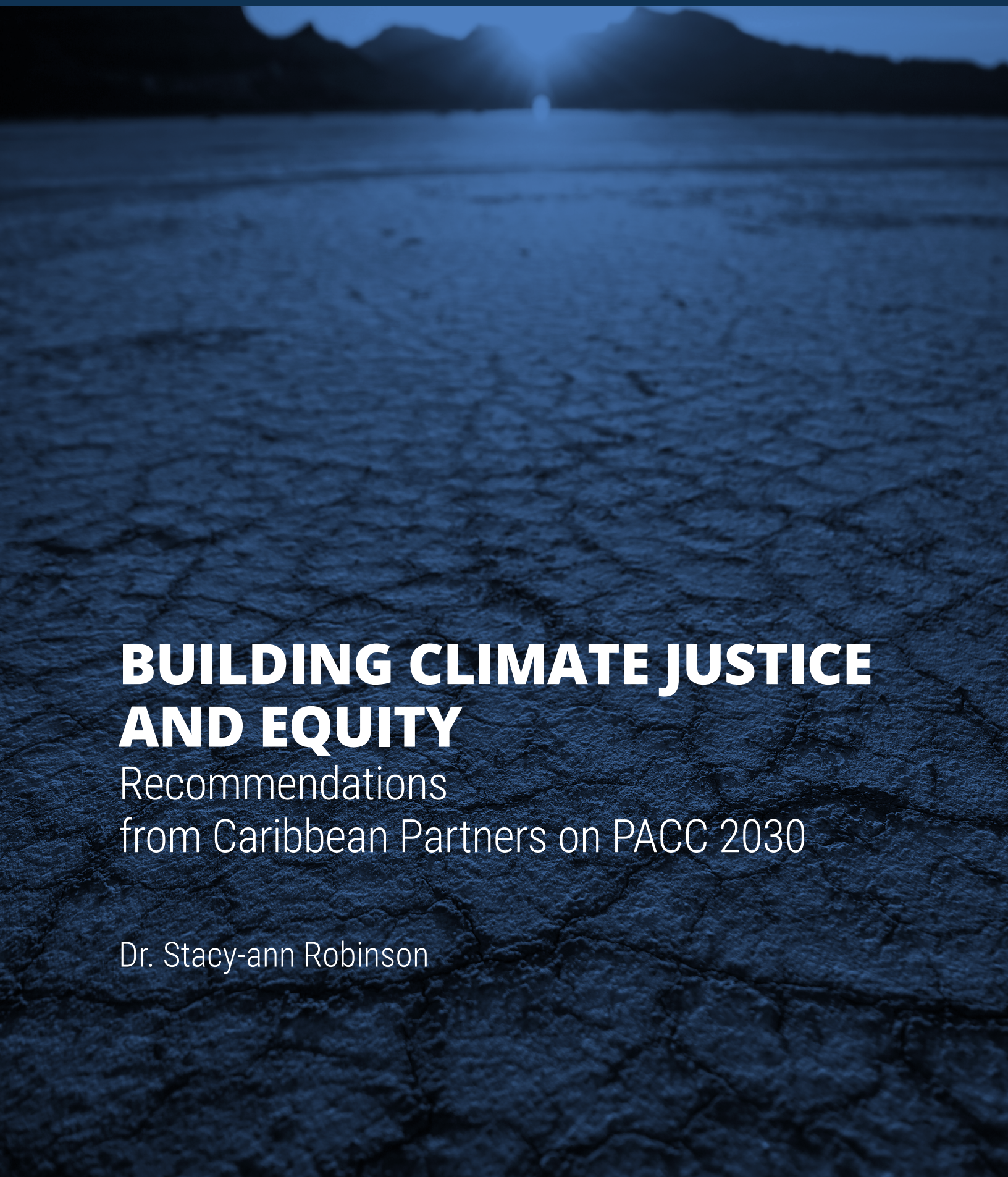
SEPTEMBER 2024



BUILDING CLIMATE JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Recommendations from Caribbean Partners on PACC 2030

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THE DIALOGUE
Leadership for the Americas

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The US-Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030 (PACC 2030) is a major initiative of the Biden-Harris administration seeking to recognize the unique climate and climate-related challenges faced by the Caribbean region, and to provide US expertise, assistance and resources in support of climate-smart services and tools. Since its launch at the Ninth Summit of the Americas in 2022, there has been growing concern about the limited participation of civil society stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of the initiative. As a result of this, the Inter-American Dialogue's Energy Transition and Climate Program created a Citizen Advisory Group in 2023, and convened it three times between September 2023 and February 2024, in an effort to engage a diverse group of voices in the policy process. The Group aims to ensure that PACC 2030 reflects the needs of marginalized subnational populations in the Caribbean, and incorporates local wisdom, particularly intergenerational ecological knowledge and practices. This report, which was commissioned by the Inter-American Dialogue, synthesizes the perspectives of the Citizen Advisory Group on PACC 2030, and offers a diagnosis of the initiative's present efficacy alongside a roadmap for future policy improvements toward the Caribbean.

KEYWORDS

Climate change, civil society, colonialism, finance, identity, justice, marginalization, non- governmental organizations, participation, Sustainable Development Goals

INTRODUCTION

Countries in the Caribbean are on the frontlines of climate change. Their unique environmental characteristics, including small island size and fragile ecosystems, and susceptibility to sea-level rise and coastal erosion, make the region especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (Robinson, 2020a). For example, rising sea-levels threaten coastal communities and infrastructure, increasing the risk of saltwater intrusion into freshwater sources and exacerbating energy insecurity by affecting water supply and energy infrastructure resilience (Robinson, 2020a). Extreme weather events, in particular, significantly disrupt development initiatives, especially as the region is dependent on tourism and other climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and fisheries (Insanally and Mowla, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have caused other disruptions that have negatively impacted the productivity of the workforce and placed additional stress on healthcare systems, and disrupted global supply chains, resulting in increased food and energy insecurity (Insanally and Mowla, 2022). These and other impacts and events have created new and additional hardships in the region, making it more challenging for Governments to build resilience in the face of a myriad climate, climate- related and climate-amplified challenges.

The US-Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030 (PACC 2030) is a major initiative of the Biden-Harris administration, which seeks to recognize the unique climate and climate-related challenges faced by the Caribbean region, and to provide US expertise, assistance and resources in support of climate-smart services and tools (US Department of State, 2022). Announced at the Ninth Summit of the Americas, which was held in Los Angeles, California, in June 2022, it is the US Government's main attempt to enhance climate adaptation and resilience actions in the region in support of the long-term goals of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, and Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (The White House, 2022a). PACC 2030 also holds geopolitical importance. By providing the necessary financial and technical assistance to the Caribbean, the initiative reduces the region's reliance on US adversaries such as China, Russia, and Venezuela, which in turn reduces the threat to the US' "third border" (Insanally and Mowla, 2022, online). However, to ensure its success, the US would need to demonstrate its commitment to a sustainable partnership as similar initiatives announced by previous US administrations were short-lived and did not meet the expectations of key stakeholders.

PACC 2030 is organized into four main pillars (see Figure 1 below). It establishes two main entry points – energy security, and climate adaptation and resilience (US Department of State, 2022). It also centralizes stable access to clean energy resources and the development and enhancement of resilient energy infrastructure (US Department of State, 2022). Parts of the initiative have entered into the implementation phase, with technical assistance, training, and virtual and in-person conferences already underway (US Department of State, 2022). Implementation has been primarily carried out by the US Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with various national-level governments, institutions, and private sector entities to support the renewable energy transition, facilitate climate adaptation, and bolster energy security and resilience in the region (US Department of State, 2022).

FIGURE 1: THE FOUR PILLARS OF PACC 2030
Source: Author

In view of the significance of PACC 2030, wide and diverse stakeholder engagement was expected. However, there has been growing concern about the limited participation of civil society actors in the formulation and implementation of the initiative (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023). It is believed that it will not be possible for the initiative to achieve its goals if it does not meaningfully engage with a diversity of civil society voices, especially as climate change impacts overlap with other inequalities that exist at the intersection of race, color, class, age and gender (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023). Furthermore, meaningful local involvement and participation are important for bridging the gap between technocratic knowledge, community needs, and best practices (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023).

In response to the concern regarding the marginalization of civil society in the policy processes related to PACC 2030, the Inter-American Dialogue's Energy Transition and Climate Program created a Citizen Advisory Group in 2023. The Dialogue convened the Citizen Advisory Group three times between September 2023 and February 2024. The first meeting was held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on September 28, 2023. The second and third meetings were held online on November 10, 2023 and February 9, 2024, respectively. Across the three meetings, the Group underscored the importance of policy implementation being enhanced by local wisdom and values in order to ensure a customized vision of sustainable development with local buy-in and durability in the region (Inter- American Dialogue, 2023). To this end, PACC 2030 should be implemented alongside targeted training, consultations and outreach, and in a way that incorporates local wisdom, particularly intergenerational ecological knowledge and practices (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023). Members of the Group include activists for women and youth, educators, members of economic and social development groups, representatives from environmental and climate organizations, and rural and Indigenous leaders.

This report, which was commissioned by the Inter-American Dialogue, synthesizes the perspectives of the Citizen Advisory Group on PACC 2030, and offers a diagnosis of the initiative's present efficacy alongside a roadmap for future policy improvements toward the Caribbean. It is hoped that any recommendations contained herein will help to strengthen US-Caribbean relations in the long term.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on a desk-based analysis of the meeting recordings of and notes from the three Citizen Advisory Group meetings, held between September 2023 and February 2024, and provided by the Inter-American Dialogue. This was supplemented by an analysis of academic and newspaper articles, policy documents, and program and project reports identified by the author through multiple internet searches that used a combination of keywords, including "PACC 2030", "US government", "President Biden", "Department of State", "Agency for International Development", "Caribbean governments", "Caribbean islands", "climate change", "climate adaptation", "climate resilience", progress, achievements, outcomes. All relevant materials were gathered and used to conduct an in- depth, unbiased diagnosis of PACC 2030's present efficacy, focusing on the initiative's four pillars, to identify gaps in US aid programs in the Caribbean region and to develop a roadmap for future US policy improvements toward the Caribbean. The findings, which are presented below, are organized into two main categories. The first category, which primarily draws on the analysis of meeting recordings of and notes from the three Citizen Advisory Group meetings, deals with findings that relate to the partnership between the US Government and the Caribbean. The second category, which mostly draws on the analysis of academic and newspaper articles, policy documents, and program and project reports, deals with findings that relate to each of the four pillars. Direct quotes are used sparingly to emphasize key points but are not directly attributed to any Group Member or organization.

FINDINGS

At the partnership level

The first major finding at the partnership level is that PACC 2030 is a relatively unknown initiative among the major non-governmental organizations working in the relevant sectors in the Caribbean region. These organizations include and extend beyond the Barbados Environmental Conservation Trust, the Cropper Foundation (Trinidad and Tobago), the Environmental Management Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Girls Care (Jamaica), Helen's Daughter (St. Lucia), The Breadfruit Collective (Guyana), and the National Garifuna Council (Belize) (see Appendix 1). Organizations such as the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (Trinidad and Tobago) and the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (Barbados) have Caribbean-wide operations, with the latter being a coalition of Caribbean non-governmental organizations. The other organizations are largely community based.

In the initial meeting of the Citizen Advisory Group, which gathered 15 stakeholders for an in-person meeting in Trinidad and Tobago, only two of those present had previous knowledge of PACC 2030—Group Members spoke in their personal capacities and not as organizational representatives. Specifically, they had heard the name in the news media but were unable to fully describe the suite of activities to be undertaken; others had previous knowledge of specific activities but were unaware of their connection to a broader initiative. This should be particularly concerning because, among their constituents, are sub-national marginalized populations, including women, youth, subsistence farmers, small business

owners, and Indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups, which should be the primary beneficiaries of PACC 2030. Furthermore, a few studies have documented the frustrations of Caribbean civil society organizations in being excluded from major bilateral initiatives. This raised concern among the Group about the nature of the outreach undertaken by the US Government prior to launching PACC 2030, and the extent to which participatory mechanisms were developed and are being used to inform on-the-ground implementation to ensure that local communities and organizations across the region are being meaningfully engaged. Members questioned the implementation timeframes of the initiative and the impacts that the impending US Presidential elections, scheduled for November 2024, would have on its survivability and sustainability. One Group Member noted that "the whole thing just feels rushed" but also that the tensions between project timelines and the pressures of electoral cycles were not new to the region or to the international development arena, and that this should be expected.

The second major finding at the partnership level is that civil society stakeholders believe that PACC 2030's focus on national governments and the private sector, while targeting two highly relevant changemakers, will significantly reduce its chances of on-the- ground success. This is so because the extent to which the partnership is being driven by local priorities and local actors (as opposed to those at the national level) is uncertain. With reference to its perceived high-level nature, one Group Member noted that, "Perhaps the approach could work for energy, but not for the other [PACC 2030] priorities such as adaptation".

A recent article by Rahman et al. (2023) highlights the importance of locally-led adaptation to climate change, arguing that actions should also be context specific and locally appropriate, bearing in mind that top-down approaches can exacerbate inequality and injustice at the local scale. Therefore, beyond the exclusion of civil society stakeholders from the development of PACC 2030, Group Members pointed to the high-level organization of the initiative itself and the appointment of high-level champions. As of September 2023, Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley was the lead on Pillar 1 (Improving access to development financing); Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, was the lead on Pillar 2 (Facilitating clean energy project development and investment); Guyana's President, Irfaan Ali, was the lead on Pillar 3 (Food security and enhancing local capacity for climate adaptation and resilience). Luis Abinader, President of the Dominican Republic, was responsible for reviewing implementation progress (The White House, 2022a).

While these appointments positively amplify the strengths and platforms of each Head of State and Government, questions emerged about the time that each official could reasonably devote to advancing work on the pillars in the context of PACC 2030. For example, among Prime Minister Mottley's regional and global responsibilities are Lead Head of Government within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), bearing responsibility for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, which aims to facilitate free movement of skills/labor, goods, services and capital, and the right of establishment of nationals from 12 CARICOM countries, including Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago; Co-Chair of the Americas Cruise Tourism Task Force for the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America markets, which implements guidance for cruise resumption in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; and Co-Chair of the World Health Organization's Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, which works to maintain urgency, public support, political momentum and visibility of the antimicrobial resistance challenge on the global health and development agendas. She is also almost single-handedly providing strong Global South leadership on calling for the reform of the International Monetary Fund and for the provision of immediate liquidity support for disaster recovery through unused Special Drawing Rights. It is further expected that Prime Minister Mottley will be a frontrunner for the post of Secretary General of the United Nations when elections are held in 2026. She would succeed António Guterres who has been serving in the position since 2017. One Group Member asked, "How could she possibly have the time?"

Related to this is a perceived lack of transparency in the operation of PACC 2030, both at the US and Caribbean national levels. Some questions that emerged in the Citizen Advisory Group meetings included: Which agency or person, in each country, is in charge of the resources for each pillar? How much funds are being distributed by these agencies or persons, and how are the funds being distributed? How are decisions being made? What are the mechanisms in place for ensuring proper accountability of the funds? Based on these questions, it is clear that better and more transparent tracking of the support is needed.

The third major finding at the partnership level is that, even though PACC 2030 is a recent and welcomed commitment under the Biden-Harris administration, there are concerns about whether it is a duplication and/or repackaging of previous US Government initiatives that were either

terminated early or that did not meet their intended objectives. Additionally, there is some confusion about whether and how various initiatives, often with similar names, are related to each other or how they intersect or are mutually reinforcing. Three examples are the Caribbean Energy Security Initiative, the US-Caribbean 2020 Multi-Year Strategy, and the Growth in the Americas Initiative, which was canceled during the Trump administration (Insanally and Mowla, 2022). There is evidence to suggest that the Caribbean Energy Security Initiative was started during the Obama administration and that it only lasted for two or three years (Insanally and Mowla, 2022). However, other sources indicate that it is a planned five-year initiative within the framework of the US Strategy for Engagement in the Caribbean (US Agency for International Development, 2019). So, as part of PACC 2030 and its Caribbean Energy Security Initiative, USAID would create a new Regional Energy Sector Reform program to help analyze clean energy investment opportunities in the region, improve utility performance, and reduce policy, regulatory and legal constraints to private investment in clean energy (see US Department of State, 2022).

The fourth major finding at the partnership level is that PACC 2030, as developed and currently implemented, is believed to have missed the mounting and urgent demands from non-governmental organizations and individuals for climate justice in the region. These demands, which are not reflected in PACC 2030, are currently being met by other local and civil society organizations. For example, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute based in Trinidad and Tobago convenes the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance, which was established in March 2022 with the help of Panos Caribbean and funding from the Open Society Foundations (Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, 2024). The Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance seeks to build a regional coalition and grassroots movement to transform policy and practice, and catalyze action for climate justice and a just transition (Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, 2024). It brings together leading civil society organizations, academics, creatives and other non-state actors and their networks working across different sectors and aspects of climate justice – economic, environmental and social justice – to spark greater awareness, engagement, and collaboration to influence policy and deliver concrete change on the ground (Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, 2024). The Open Society Foundations is a US-based grantmaking network that financially supports civil society groups around the world, with the stated aim of advancing justice among other objectives.

Together, these and other initiatives are thought to be outpacing US Government-led partnerships such as PACC 2030. In fact, stakeholders believe that local initiatives led by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and other local organizations are doing more to promote climate justice in the region. This perception is linked to the view held by Caribbean civil society stakeholders that PACC 2030 lacks an intersectional justice lens to complement assessments of geographic and financial climate vulnerability in the region. Tackling this blind spot, they pointed out, requires facilitating the participation of historically marginalized groups, including women, youth, subsistence farmers, small business owners, Indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups, who are already disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This gap can be filled by pursuing more inclusive agendas and programming, and by actively disseminating reliable climate and other information.

Specifically, the Citizen Advisory Group is calling for (1) increased and sustained support for capacity building of civil society organizations, (2) increased resources for locally-led projects, and (3) more streamlined (and less onerous) compliance requirements for grantees that have very limited technical and financial resources for project implementation.

Finally, the fifth major finding at the partnership level is that PACC 2030 does not adequately or comprehensively reflect the needs of the region, let alone the adaptation needs of specific countries. On the one hand, they find that the selection and organization of the pillars, placing most emphasis and resources on clean energy, may not necessarily align with the national priorities of some countries. However, the Group acknowledges the factors that might have motivated this decision. Among them include energy attracting the most international finance, having a clear revenue stream, and being less risky for investors. On the other hand, the Group acknowledges that both mitigation and adaptation/resilience are complementary, and that tackling energy security in the region is important.

While it is true that many Caribbean countries rely heavily on imported fossil fuels for electricity generation and transportation, and that the cost of electricity in the region is often among the highest in the world, there is considerable variability across countries, creating more urgent needs in specific energy domains (see Table 1 below). Some countries such as Barbados have identified renewable energy integration as a national priority, and have communicated this to the Secretariat of the United

Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through its Nationally Determined Contribution (Government of Barbados, 2022). Here, the country's intention is to transition to renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power to enhance energy security, and to attract related investments. Some countries such as Dominica have clear intentions to maximize a transition to cleaner sources, e.g. geothermal (Robinson and Butchart, 2022). For other countries, clean energy is not the highest development or climate change priority; rather, issues related to tourism resilience, coastal protection, water availability, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction rise to the top of environmental portfolios (Robinson, 2018).

Therefore, in the third meeting of the Citizen Advisory Group, participants highlighted the importance of bilateral partnerships that recognize that the Caribbean is not a homogenous region, and that each country has different systems and different needs that have to be tackled differently. The partnership would, therefore, benefit from paying particular attention to the needs of individual countries and also to national and subnational disparities with respect to race, gender, and cultural diversity or socio-economic inequities.

TABLE 1: SELECT CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES BY SELECT ENERGY INDICATORS
Source: Author based on data from the World Bank and Our World In Data

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITHOUT ELECTRICITY	PER CAPITA ELECTRICITY GENERATION[1]	AVERAGE RETAIL ELECTRICITY TARIFF[2]	ACCESSS TO CLEAN FUELS FOR COOKING[4]	RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSUMPTION[5]
Antigua and Barbuda	0	3,754	$0.43	100.00	0.74
Bahamas	0	5,197	$0.26	100.00	1.14
Barbados	0	3,805	$0.32	100.00	4.57
Belize	28,418	1,600	N/A[3]	83.00	30.20
Cuba	22,667	1,755	N/A[3]	94.30	23.93
Dominica	0	2,347	$0.43	89.40	8.31
Dominican Republic	0	1,580	$0.21	91.50	16.69
Grenada	5,120	1,685	$0.40	88.30	10.36
Guyana	62,452	1,529	$0.32	82.00	12.04
Haiti	6,152,869	86	$0.38	4.30	76.31
Jamaica	18,168	1,538	$0.36	82.50	11.43
St. Kitts and Nevis	0	4,619	N/A[3]	100.00	1.36
St. Lucia	827	1,948	$0.38	94.40	9.96
St. Vicent and the Grenadines	0	1,533	$0.36	92.90	4.90
Suriname	12,282	3,295	$0.05	94.80	14.66
Trinidad and Tobago	0	6,639	$0.06	100.00	0.47

[1] Annual average electricity generation per person, measured in kilowatt-hours.
[2] Average tariff per kilowatt/hour.
[3] Not available at time of writing.
[4] Percentage of population.

At the Pillar Level

To diagnose PACC 2030's present efficacy, the following subsections below assess each of the four pillars. The first three subsections provide an overview of the (1) aims of the pillar, (2) Caribbean context, (3) PACC 2030 activities and updates, and (4) programming gaps. The fourth subsection, on Pillar 4, focuses on (1) and (3). Activity updates are up to the end of March 2024 unless stated otherwise.

PILLAR 1: IMPROVING ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

Aims of the pillar: The first pillar of PACC 2030 focuses on development financing, aiming to find ways to increase funds and implement meaningful structural reforms. To this end, the US is exploring possible partnerships with some of the major multilateral development banks such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Caribbean Development Bank (The White House, 2022a). The US Department of Treasury will endorse international financing mechanisms by requesting temporary access to World Bank extreme event funds, along with requiring more transparency on how the World Bank criteria for accessing International Development Association assistance. Expanded cooperation with the Caribbean Development Bank is also aimed at under this pillar (through US bilateral grants, technical assistance, and project financing) (The White House, 2022a).

Caribbean context: Caribbean countries have diverse experiences with development financing, and its status in specific Caribbean countries varies depending on a number of factors, ranging from macroeconomic stability (e.g. inflation, debt levels), to commitment to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and other globally-agreed development targets (see Figure 2 below). Policy- and decision-makers channel resources toward resolving weaknesses in these areas to improve access to funding for a variety of development initiatives, including climate action.

These factors aside, perhaps one of the most influential yet structural factors in development finance access is

FIGURE 2: RANGE OF FACTORS AFFECTING FLOWS OF DEVELOPMENT FINANCE TO THE CARIBBEAN
Source: Author

the income categorization of countries. Though many countries in the region continue to receive development assistance from donor countries, international organizations, and multilateral development banks to address socio-economic challenges, enhance resilience to natural hazards, and support sustainable development initiatives, there are 16 high-income countries in the region (Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Guyana, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, St. Martin, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, and US Virgin Islands) with per capita gross national incomes of $13,846 and above (World Bank, 2024). An additional nine countries are upper middle-income (Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname) with per capita gross national incomes between $4,466 and $13,845 (World Bank, 2024). Haiti is the only lower middle-income country. Its per capita gross national income is between $1,136 and $4,465 (World Bank, 2024).

Countries in the Caribbean, irrespective of their income classifications, find it difficult to attract external finance, but also vary in terms of World Bank loan eligibility. International Development Association countries (only Guyana and Haiti currently qualify) have low per capita incomes and lack the ability to borrow from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank, 2024). Only Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago currently qualify to borrow from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank, 2024). Blend countries (only Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines currently qualify) are eligible for both International Development Association and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development loans because of their credit worthiness (World Bank, 2024). Besides the overseas territories (i.e. Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, St. Martin, Turks and Caicos Islands, and US Virgin Islands), Bahamas, Barbados and Cuba fall outside this eligibility. Pillar 1 also aiming for greater transparency on the World Bank criteria for accessing International Development Association assistance is, therefore, an important objective.

Barbados, Jamaica and Haiti can provide three examples of recent experiences with development financing from countries across the spectrum. Barbados, in spite of its high- income country status, has faced fiscal challenges and high debt levels, leading to a reliance on external financing and support from multilateral institutions (International Monetary Fund, 2022). In 2018, it entered into an Extended Fund Facility program with the International Monetary Fund to address fiscal imbalances and debt sustainability issues (International Monetary Fund, 2022). The program included policy reforms aimed at strengthening public finances, enhancing competitiveness, and promoting growth (International Monetary Fund, 2022). The Government has also sought to diversify sources of development financing through partnerships with bilateral donors, international organizations, and private sector investors (International Monetary Fund, 2022).

Jamaica, as an upper middle-income country, has a history of reliance on multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank for development financing (World Bank, 2021). In recent years, it has implemented structural reforms and fiscal consolidation measures supported by the International Monetary Fund, which have helped stabilize the economy and improve access to international capital markets (World Bank, 2021). The Government has also pursued initiatives to attract foreign direct investment, and public-private partnerships to finance infrastructure projects and stimulate economic growth (World Bank, 2021).

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere and is heavily dependent on external development assistance for its development needs. The Government collaborates with multilateral institutions, bilateral donors, and non-governmental organizations to implement development projects in areas such as infrastructure, healthcare, education, and disaster resilience (World Bank, 2023). These country examples – Barbados, Jamaica and Haiti – show that common challenges across the region include debt sustainability, fiscal management, governance, and capacity constraints. However, countries such as the Dominican Republic have experienced robust economic growth in recent years, driven by sectors such as tourism, manufacturing, and agriculture, reducing their reliance on external development financing by pursuing policies to attract foreign direct investment, promoting export-oriented industries, and improving infrastructure to support economic development (US International Trade Administration, 2024). This shows that strengthening domestic institutions, promoting sustainable economic growth, and enhancing partnerships with international stakeholders can be key for improving access to development financing in the region.

PACC 2030 activities and updates: The activities associated with Pillar 1 and any updates are summarized in Table 2 below. There are two other activities that are associated with Pillar 1 – the US' concessional loan of almost $1 billion to the Clean Technology Fund to support the Dominican Republic's transition to clean energy, and the Dominican Republic- US International Development Finance Corporation and USAID working with domestic financial institutions to expand financing for small businesses with a focus on energy security, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate solutions (US Department of State, 2024). As these are energy focused, they are not captured in the table below.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF PILLAR 1 ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES
Source: Author

BENEFICIARY COUNTRY / COUNTRIES	BRIEF ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	UPDATES
Barbados	In January 2023, the USAID announced financial and technical support to help the Government of Barbados set up the Blue-Green Investment Corporation, wich will help finance over $250 million of green investments (US Department of State, 2024).	The Government of Barbados decided to use $10 million from the fiscal space from its Resilience and Sustainability Facility at the International Monetary Fund (International Monetary Fund, 2023). From all indications, the Blue Green Bank is not yet operational (International Monetary Fund, 2023).
Guyana	The US Export-Import Bank and the Government of Guyana signed a memorandum of understanding to explore options for up to $2 billion in financing for projects in clean energy, water treatment, sanitation, and other sectors (US Department of State, 2024).	Deals reportedly in the pipeline for approvals but details relating to money thresholds are currently unknown (Stabroek News, 2023).
Jamaica and Barbados	The US supported efforts at the International Monetary Fund to help secure $1 billion of affordable financing to address long-term challenges such as climate change and pandemic preparedness (US Department of State, 2024).	The precise role and involvement of the US Executive Office at the International Monetary Fund is unknown. However, the US Government continues to lend to the Fund´s Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust and its Resilience and Sustainability Trust (US Department of State, 2024).

From Table 2 above, it is clear that development finance is a cross-cutting issue, supporting a wide range of projects across various sectors. Therefore, its inclusion as a stand-alone pillar is warranted. Another observation that can be made is that there has been limited progress since the various announcements. From all indications, Barbados' Blue Green Bank is not yet operational (International Monetary Fund, 2023), and the projects to be supported under the memorandum of understanding between the US Export-Import Bank and the Government of Guyana have not yet been approved (Stabroek News, 2023). This could also be a function of limited information being available online.

Programming gaps: Considering the activities associated with Pillar 1, one gap the Citizen Advisory Group identified is the limited nature and scope of the pillar itself—it focuses almost exclusively on just three countries – Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica - and excludes the others, though there is some attention on the Dominican Republic. Only one of the focus countries (Barbados) is among the five most indebted countries in the region.

Because of this, civil society stakeholders believe that Pillar 1 does not explicitly consider and/or address the region's debt burden, and that this is a significant blind spot in the programming. The Caribbean is among the most indebted regions in the world, with debt levels (excluding Haiti) averaging upwards of 90% of gross domestic product (First Citizens Group, 2022). This puts the region significantly above the World Bank's 77% of gross domestic product threshold for developing countries (First Citizens Group, 2022).

However, high debt levels have been a long-standing challenge for the Caribbean, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the issue (Inter-American Development Bank, 2023). Indeed, the average debt to gross domestic product ratio in the Caribbean was 71.4% in 2018 (First Citizens

Group, 2022). As of 2021, the ratio of nine Caribbean countries exceeded the World Bank's threshold, while only four countries fell below it (First Citizens Group, 2022). The five most indebted countries in the region for 2021 were Barbados (137%), Suriname (125%), Bahamas (102%), Dominica (101%), and Antigua and Barbuda (97%) (First Citizens Group, 2022). Future US-Caribbean partnerships on development finance should prioritize these countries more broadly, irrespective of the fact that, of these five countries, three of them (i.e. Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas and Barbados) are currently classified by the World Bank as high-income countries. Attention should also be placed on Haiti.

A second gap is that the pillar's focus areas do not reflect the current socio-economic realities of the region. One Group Member observed that they are "deeply disconnected".

Another noted that the region is in "financial crisis" and that far reaching US legislation unrelated to the climate crisis such as the 2010 Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act have contributed to this. This Act, in particular, has made it more expensive for Caribbean and other foreign institutions to comply with reporting requirements, and more difficult for women, youth, subsistence farmers, small business owners, and Indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups who are more likely to be involved in informal work, to access loans from traditional banks to support climate adaptation and other efforts.

Indeed, the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act is an important development in US efforts to combat tax evasion—it requires foreign financial institutions to "report directly to the IRS [Internal Revenue Service] information about financial accounts held by US taxpayers or by foreign entities in which US taxpayers hold a substantial ownership interest" (US Internal Revenue Service, 2024, online). The reporting institutions include not only banks, but also other financial institutions, such as investment entities, brokers, and certain insurance companies (US Internal Revenue Service, 2024). Though the US Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service are continually developing guidance concerning the Act, it has had several unintended consequences. These include the creation of a two-tiered banking system - an "upper tier of the larger financial institutions … [that] continue to deal with US financial institutions and a lower tier, which will refuse to do so" (Tax Notes Research, 2011, online). It has also increased the risk of foreign divestment of US investments and foreign investment losses. Future US-Caribbean partnerships on development finance should also focus on reforming laws that can increase fiscal space alongside the ease of "doing business" and the volume of investments in critical areas such as climate action.

A third gap is that Pillar 1 does not have an emphasis on addressing some of the overarching issues with international finance that policy- and decision-makers in the Caribbean have identified, including direct access (see Kalaidjian and Robinson, 2022). While the pillar aims to find ways to increase funds and implement meaningful structural reforms, it does not help with devising strategies for allowing accredited national, regional, and sub-regional entities in the Caribbean to directly access financing without having to go through an international intermediary institution such as the World Bank (see Kalaidjian and Robinson, 2022). Future US-Caribbean partnerships on development finance should, therefore, position the US to use its influence in the international system to advocate for direct budgetary support for Caribbean countries and, through wide consultations, including with civil society organizations, to devise innovative financing mechanisms to support climate adaptation and resilience goals, all while helping to reduce public debt. This call was alsoreflected in a letter the Caribbean Policy Development Centre and over 50 non- governmental organizations in the region sent to President Biden and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in September 2023 (Dominica News Online, 2023). The letter asked for: (1) support for a new issuance of at least $650 billion in Special Drawing Rights at the International Monetary Fund, (2) backing of the elimination of the International Monetary Fund's surcharge policy, and (3) commitment to providing climate-related loss and damage funding (Dominica News Online, 2023). This signals that civil society organizations in the region are very much aware that climate justice is debt justice, and are mobilizing accordingly.

PILLAR 2: FACILITATING CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT

Aims of the pillar: The second pillar of PACC 2030 encourages the establishment of the PACC 2030 Investment Facilitation Team through which the US Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources, USAID and the US Trade and Development Agency will collaborate to identify funding gaps for renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors, and to leverage greater private sector investments (The White House, 2022)a. Additionally, the PACC 2030 Technical Assistance Program will work on building Caribbean utility capacity (deploying clean energy, and resilient power systems), applying climate science in

decision- making systems, conducting feasibility studies (i.e. the analysis required to take projects to the financing stage), and developing strategies for infrastructure development (The White House, 2022a).

Caribbean context: The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to natural hazards, and experiences a high frequency of hurricanes, tropical storms, and other extreme weather events (Griffen and Robinson, 2023). For instance, Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 caused widespread damage to energy infrastructure across several Caribbean islands, especially Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, and Puerto Rico, resulting in prolonged power outages, disruptions to essential services, and economic losses (Robinson et al., 2023). The region's susceptibility to natural hazards heightens its energy insecurity compared to other regions with less frequent or severe weather events.

Furthermore, as Group Members noted, the energy systems in the Caribbean are not equipped to incorporate renewables. Projects are small and costs are high. Policy- and decision-makers need help with increasing their technical capacities, attracting finance and development, and reducing utility constraints.

Limited energy access affects education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, exacerbating social inequalities and hindering development. However, access to clean energy is influenced by a range of factors, including whether countries have (1) clear and supportive policies and regulations for developing and adopting clean energy technologies,

(2) a favorable investment climate (e.g. is politically stable with transparent regulations that encourage private investment in clean energy projects), (3) access to abundant and cost- effective renewable resources, (4) infrastructure that supports advances in clean energy technologies and that supports energy transmission and distribution, (5) access to financing,

(6) training programs, education initiatives, and partnerships with academic institutions and industry stakeholders, (7) outreach campaigns that build public support for clean energy, and

(8) public acceptance of clean energy initiatives. With these, countries in the Caribbean can enhance their access to clean energy and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable and low-carbon future. Furthermore, countries with stable economies and supportive government policies are more likely to attract investment in renewable energy infrastructure.

Despite progress in expanding energy access, many Caribbean countries still face challenges in providing reliable and affordable electricity to all residents. In Haiti, for example, only about 40% of the population has access to electricity (see Table 1 above), with access rates much lower in rural areas. So though renewable energy is being increasingly generated and deployed across the region (there is approximately 105.1 megawatts of solar; 161.85 megawatts of wind, 345.49 megawatts of hydro, and 72.10 megawatts of biomass/waste to energy), many countries use imported fuel to generate between 80% and 90% of their energy (World Bank, 2022). Because of this, energy costs in the region are also among the highest globally. Retail electricity prices have exceeded $0.40 per kilowatt-hour in some countries (see Table 1 above). In Barbados, for example, the average residential electricity rate is around $0.34 per kilowatt-hour, which is almost three times higher than the average rate in North America and Europe (World Bank, 2022). With the global oil prices on the rise, the already high energy prices in the Caribbean will hike even further. High energy costs are straining household budgets, hindering economic competitiveness, and contributing to energy poverty in the region.

PACC 2030 activities and updates: Some of the country-specific activities associated with Pillar 2 and any updates are summarized in Table 3 below. There are also multi-country and regional-level initiatives. With respect to the latter and in support of enhancing regulatory frameworks, clean energy projects, and institutional capacity, the US Department of State will train Caribbean energy regulators and utilities (US Department of State, 2024). As part of the Caribbean Climate Investment Program, USAID will facilitate access to finance for private sector climate investment in renewables, energy efficiency, and adaptation through advisory services (US Department of State, 2024).

TABLE 3: SNAPSHOT OF PILLAR 2 ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES
Source: Author

BENEFICIARY COUNTRY / COUNTRIES	BRIEF ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	UPDATES
Antigua and Barbuda	The US Department of State´s Global Climate Action Partnership is providing backup power to facilities and supporting capacity building and workforce development for the installation and mainteinance of clean and resilient energy technologies (US Department of States, 2024)	The National Renewable Energy Laboratory provided technical assistance on procuring grid-interactive solar photovoltaics with battery energy storage systems and accessories for schools and clinics, developing a workforce strategy for prioritizing energy sectors, developing a community solar porgram and tariff design, and deploying electric buses (National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 2023). The Laboratory also has plans to scale up assistance for rebuilding energy infrastructure and developing resilient renewable energy systems for Barbuda (National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 2023).
Barbados	PACC 2030 is supporting the development of a regulatory roadmap for clean energy battery storage (US Department of State, 2024)	The USAID held a forum on battery storage system regulation and adoption in February 2023 (US Department of State, 2024).
Dominica	The US Department of State´s Power Sector Program is providing technical support for the construction of a geothermial plant (US Department of State, 2024).	The precise nature of the technical support is unclear.
Dominican Republic	PACC 2023 is supporting the development of a regulatory roadmap for clean energy battery storage (US Department of State, 2024). USAID also launched an assessment of potential rooftop solar expansion in June 2023 (US Department of State, 2024)	A market and gap analysis had been planned since 2021, before PACC 2030 (US Trade and Development Agency, 2021). A contract for energy storage consulting services was published in November 2021 and closed in January 2022 (US Trade and Development Agency, 2023). Separately, the USAID led a series of training workshops on energy cybersecurity in December 2022 (US Department of State, 2024).
Jamaica	USAID launched an assessment of potential rooftop solar expansion in December 2022 (US Department of State, 2024)	It was reported that the Government of Jamaica has been slow to provide the data needed for the work to progress (BNAmericas, 2023).
St. Lucia	The US Department of State is helping to build regulatory capacity to enhance power market competition and attract more clean energy investment (US Department of State, 2024).	Subsequent activities with the US Government are unclear.

From Table 3 above, it appears that Pillar 2 is supporting a wide range of clean energy activities in one or two countries. These activities include renewable energy development (solar, geothermal), development of resilient energy technologies (e.g. hurricane-resistant turbines, electric vehicle charging stations), energy storage and cybersecurity, and electricity sector reform. This is also the case with related activities targeting three or more countries (see US Department of State, 2024). For example:

- The US Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program is reviewing contract templates and delivering capacity building on Power Purchase Agreements to improve the bankability of contracts.

- The US Department of State's Power Sector in partnership with the Caribbean Electric Utility Services Corporation, the Organisation of Caribbean Utility Regulators, and others is providing technical and regulatory support for clean energy and electric vehicle deployment in Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname.
- The US and the Inter-American Development Bank are supporting a green shipping challenge in The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago – to develop plans to align Caribbean shipping practices with the 1.5-degree Celsius target outlined in the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.
- The US Trade and Development Agency hosted a virtual workshop on Smart Grid and Climate Technologies, which targeted Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.

Considering the breadth of the above activities, it appears PACC 2030 is helping Caribbean governments move from policies to action. An example is the US Department of State's Power Sector Program providing technical support for the construction of a geothermal plant in Dominica. Geothermal development has been a long-standing priority of the Government of Dominica, especially in the context of its plan to achieve 100% renewable energy in its power sector and becoming the first climate resilient country in the world (Robinson and Butchart, 2022). The Dominica Geothermal Development Company Limited completed the drilling and well testing for the plant in the community of Laudat located in the Roseau Valley (US Department of State, 2024). At the time of the PACC 2030 announcement, Dominica was in the process of seeking external partners to finance its construction when the US Department of State offered technical assistance—construction and commercial operation of the plant are projected to begin in 2025 and 2026, respectively (US Department of State, 2024). On the one hand, this could suggest that the US Government is a valuable implementation partner in the region. On the other hand, it provided technical support when the country's expressed need was financial support.

This aside, but across the suite of activities associated with Pillar 2, it is difficult to decipher implementation and other timelines, and to differentiate between those initiatives being led or sponsored by the US Government versus those that were already being implemented by national governments or with the support of other partners. One example is in St. Lucia where the US Department of State is helping to build regulatory capacity. An Energy Transition Strategy and Integrated Resource Plan had already been in place, and the Government in collaboration with the St. Lucia Electricity Services had previously developed the National Energy Transition Strategy, which was endorsed by the Cabinet (Rocky Mountain Institute, 2017). In January 2024, the World Bank invested $40 million in related efforts (Caribbean National Weekly, 2024). As a result, the ongoing role of the US is unclear. Another example is the US' contribution to geothermal development in Dominica. The Government of Dominica called for external partners to finance the construction of a geothermal power plant, and took out a significant World Bank loan in December 2022 to create a resilient electrical grid to connect the plant with the capital city of Roseau – USAID offered technical assistance. These two examples show that there are considerable developments in the region that are happening outside of the PACC 2030 framework, and that partnerships with multilateral institutions for clean energy could be more valuable to the region at this time. However, clarifying or measuring the 'additionality' of US support would contribute to transparency and improve PACC 2030 optics.

Programming gaps: Based on a scan of the activities associated with Pillar 2, the Citizen Advisory Group was of the impression that energy investments were concentrated in three countries and on fossil fuels. However, a closer assessment reveals that Pillar 2 offers the most comprehensive coverage of islands, though the motivation for supporting specific activities in specific countries was sometimes unclear. For example, the main hydrocarbon producers in the region (Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname) were not targeted for single country support. Instead, Guyana and Suriname were targeted for virtual workshops on smart grids and climate technology, and Suriname for regulatory support for clean energy and electric vehicle deployment. Trinidad and Tobago was included in the green shipping challenge. Thus, alongside working meaningfully with the main hydrocarbon producers in the region and filling any gaps in energy sources, particularly wind, future US-Caribbean partnerships on clean energy should help promote a variety of economic incentives and instruments (e.g. feed-in tariffs and tax credits). Moreover, they should place sufficient attention on the countries where energy insecurity is highest (Haiti), which would help prioritize energy access for underserved communities and marginalized populations.

While this report recommends prioritizing Haiti for clean energy interventions, the current political situation in the country will pose significant challenges, particularly

regarding governance and security issues exacerbated by gang control. US Government officials might argue that there is no clear counterpart in Haiti. However, the complexity of the situation cannot be overstated as a number of intertwined historical, political, and socio-economic factors have contributed to the current state of affairs. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond simply identifying and/or appointing a clear counterpart. In support of a more sustainable development in Haiti, a US-Caribbean partnership could more comprehensively (1) address the current security and humanitarian concerns, and directly support initiatives that amplify human rights, social justice and conflict resolution techniques, (2) promote longer-term investments in capacity building, which should seek to empower local communities and civil society organizations, and (3) address the root causes of instability and insecurity, which include poverty, inequality, and the historical legacies of colonization and exploitation.

PILLAR 3: FOOD SECURITY AND ENHANCING LOCAL CAPACITY FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

Aims of the pillar: The third pillar of PACC 2030 focuses on utilizing global climate data, tools, and information to promote adaptation and resilience action. Caribbean partners will provide region-specific needs for early-warning disaster risk reduction, and climate adaptation. A focus on food security was added later and ultimately became a defining component of the pillar (see Figure 3 below). Next-generation decision-makers in the Caribbean will be equipped with the right tools through building institutional capacity (i.e. innovative, inclusive training). Peer-to-peer networks will be established to cultivate local island-to-island solutions. Nature-based solutions will be designed like effective management of marine protected area networks (The White House, 2022b).

FIGURE 3: COMPONENTS OF PILLAR 3
Source: Author

Caribbean context: Roughly 16% of the Caribbean population goes hungry, despite the region producing enough food to meet the needs of all its inhabitants (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020). The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has maintained that, "the central problem concerning hunger in the region is not a lack of food, but rather the problems that the poorest members of society face in gaining access to that food" (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020, p. 254). Barbados, for example, relies heavily on imported food items to meet domestic demand, with over 80% of its food consumption being imported (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2021). In the Dominican Republic, about 10% of the population does not have access to food (Food Security Information Network, 2021). In Haiti, this number is around 35% of the population (approximately 3.7 million people) (Food Security Information Network, 2021). In Jamaica, food prices remain high compared to other countries in the region, impacting food access for low-income households (Food Security Information Network, 2021). These conditions create food insecurity, which further leads to significant health burdens affecting individuals and households, notably due to undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. In 2019, the prevalence of undernutrition in the Caribbean at 16.6%, which is used to indicate hunger, was nearly double the global rate of 8.9% (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020).

Caribbean governments recognize the need to respond to the impacts of climate change on food security and other domains (Lincoln Lenderking et al., 2020). A study by Robinson (2018) identified the following sectors as having the highest number of adaptations in the Caribbean: (1) coastal zone and the environment (not otherwise classified) (12% each; of instances where sectors were indicated in countries' National Communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), (2) forestry and agriculture (11%), (3) tourism (10%), and (4) water (9%) sectors (Robinson, 2018). Because of resource constraints at the national and subnational levels, regional organizations such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and the Caribbean Community through its Climate Change Centre play a critical role in coordinating and supporting climate adaptation and resilience efforts across the region to address common challenges. These organizations facilitate collaborative projects, capacity building, and knowledge sharing (Robinson and Gilfillan, 2017). Even with the work of regional organizations coordinating action, more work is needed to address the region's evolving climate challenges and to help secure a sustainable and resilient future. This includes scaling up investments in adaptation measures, integrating climate considerations into development planning, strengthening institutional capacities, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships for climate action.

However, the success of these is threatened by the frequency and intensity of hurricanes and other natural hazards in the region.

Hurricanes are a common hazard in the Caribbean, with the North Atlantic hurricane season lasting from June 1 to November 30 each year and around 20 of the islands located in the "Hurricane Alley" – a section of warm water in the Atlantic Ocean supporting the formation of hurricanes. They have the potential to cause large scale damage to property and infrastructure as well as loss of human life and livelihoods. Climate change is intensifying hurricanes in the Caribbean (Mycoo, 2018). According to the World Bank (2019), between 1996 and 2015, hurricanes cost the region around $8.6 billion. In 2015, for example, Tropical Storm Erika wiped out 90% of Dominica's gross domestic product (roughly $483 million), caused 13 deaths, and displaced around 23% of the population (ACAPS, 2017). Four thousand five hundred farmers were affected, and although agriculture only makes up roughly 10% of the country's gross domestic product, it contributes to the livelihoods of about 40% of the population engaged in various levels of farming and related activities (ACAPS, 2017). Many residents who were classified as 'vulnerable' later fell into poverty; many who were food secure became at risk of food insecurity (ACAPS, 2017).

Since then, a series of Category 5 hurricanes, including Irma and Maria in 2017, have caused even more loss and damage in the region. Dominica again lost an estimated 226% of its gross domestic product due to Maria (Government of Dominica, 2017)—it completely wiped out the agriculture sector. Bananas and other tree crops were totally destroyed (Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, 2019). Poultry houses across the island were either completely destroyed or severely damaged with massive loss of life of birds recorded (Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, 2019). Sheep, pigs and goats were lost due to floods and their housing structures severely damaged (Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, 2019). As negative storm impacts can last upwards of a year after a strike (Ishizawa et al., 2019), they trigger longer- term economic impacts and create competing development priorities.

PACC 2030 activities and updates: The country-specific activities associated with Pillar 3 and any updates are summarized in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4: SNAPSHOT OF PILLAR 3 ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES
Source: Author

BENEFICIARY COUNTRY / COUNTRIES	BRIEF ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	UPDATES
Barbados and Dominica	**Climate Adaptation and Resilience:** Support of the Caribbean Islands Higher Education Resilience Consortium with Northeastern University (Boston, MA) to advance community-driven climate and economic resilience planning in three vulnerable communities (US Department of State, 2024)	The US State Department has committed to launching the Energy Resilience and Security in the Caribbean Program, which commits to building island resilience (US Department of State, 2024).
Dominican Republic	**Food Security:** A two-year project worth $2.7 million to address the spike in food prices, crude oil, and commodities -including fertilizers and other common agricultural inputs- due to supply chain disruptions (US Department of State, 2024)	The US Environmental Protection Agency conducted a series of customized capacity building training sessions to promote pesticide management and strengthen food security (US Department of State, 2024).
	Climate Adaption and Resilience: Mapping and quantifying the benefits of mangroves and coral reefs for coastal flood protection (US Department of States, 2024).	The Coastal Risk Index that uses the project data was launched during New York City´s Climate Week in September 2023 (Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance, 2024).
Haiti	**Food Security:** Under the McGovern-Dole program, a new five-year project valued at $33 million was approved to deliver daily school meals (US Department of State, 2024). There is also a local and regional procurement component, technical assistance and advocacy to build resilience, nutrition education, improve access to water, and increase literacy (US Department of State, 2024).	The actual number of beneficiaries is unclear. Food assistance projects funded by the US Department of Agriculture´s Foreign Agricultura Service are subject to independent evaluation and results are published to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (US Department of Agriculture, 2024). However, no recent evaluation for this project in Haiti was found.
Guyana	**Disaster and Emergency Preparedness:** The US Department of Defense to host an annual exercise with Caribbean partners (US Department of State, 2024).	A least one exercise was held (based on US Department of State, 2024). It is unclear whether the location will be rotated in subsequent years.
Trinidad	**Food Security:** The US Department of Agriculture´s Scientific Exchange Program is supporting collaborations that focus on a range of activities, from increasing climate adaptation practices, to managing the badnavirus in cocoa production (US Department of State, 2024)	The call for applications closed in June 2022 (US Department of Agriculture, 2022). The number of Trinidadian nationals that benefitted from the program is unclear.

Based on the scale of the support that country-specific interventions in Table 4 address the critical drivers of food insecurity – spikes in food prices, crude oil and commodities. It appears that the Dominican Republic is a priority. Most of the activities associated with this pillar support a range of multi-country and regional-level activities. The multi-country activities include (US Department of State, 2024):

- The US Agency for International Development and Inter-American Foundation dedicating $5 million to help build community resilience in Eastern and Southern Caribbean countries since 2020.
- The US Agency for International Development and the US Department of Agriculture offering specialized training opportunities for extension officers on efficient use of fertilizer, bio-fertilizer production, and nutrient management in the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- The promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, and increased farmer knowledge in Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Regional-level activities include (US Department of State, 2024):

- The US Agency for International Development supporting the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre to accelerate climate action and access climate finance by strengthening capacities to, among other things, provide and manage climate data and modeling tools.
- The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration supporting the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology and Caribbean Regional Climate Outlook Forum in carrying out various climate adaptation and resilience activities.
- The US Department of Defense operationalizing a Climate Resilience Initiative to provide training, planning and regional response capabilities, fund research on climate and defense security, and increase partners' capabilities and tools to obtain climate information.

In the second meeting of the Citizen Advisory Group, which was held online, Group Members indicated that it was difficult to give feedback on Pillar 3 as there was very little publicly-available information on the activities and the progress being made on their implementation—as one Group Member said "It's just too early to tell". This is compounded by national governments being focused on "winning elections" and subnational stakeholders not knowing "what the end goals [of PACC 2030] are and the indicators for success", and "who the [non-Caribbean] partners are". There is a perception that civil society organizations were not consulted in setting the agenda for PACC 2030, and were consequently excluded from consultations to determine appropriate solutions for the region. One Member remarked that it was as though high-level partners had a "dialogue among themselves". This was followed by questions relating to the use of mechanisms that would ensure transparency.

Specifically with respect to the food security component, one Group Member asked, "Is it all about farming?", hinting that priorities might not have emerged from local stakeholders with intimate knowledge of the region, its circumstances and its needs. In support of this, another Group Member asked, "Where are these priorities coming from? Are the priorities being led by US experts?", noting that the Caribbean has a lot of agriculture experts, including those based at and/or working at Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation. Another Group Member added that the pillar does not emphasize post-harvest value chains, or rural women producers, or even small-scale fisheries, which are critical considerations for resilience-building in the region. These observations aside, Group Members agreed that this pillar has "lots of potential" and that "a good proposal could be made for this", provided that civil society stakeholders are appropriately engaged and consulted.

Programming gaps: Considering the activities associated with Pillar 3, one gap the Citizen Advisory Group identified is the absence of innovation and a "double counting" of initiatives. Put simply, many of these activities are not new as they started well before PACC 2030 was announced in June 2022. For example, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was already supporting the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology and Caribbean Regional Climate Outlook Forum in carrying out various climate adaptation and resilience activities. Future US-Caribbean initiatives in this area should, therefore, be new and additional to the activities already underway in

the region, as the double-counting of initiatives provides neither an accurate representation of US Government support toward the region, nor space to address emerging challenges.

A second gap is the exclusion of other islands with major food security needs. Although the five-year $33 million project under the McGovern-Dole program to deliver daily school meals in Haiti is a welcome addition (US Department of State, 2024), islands like Antigua and Barbuda and Haiti need large(r)-scale support . Future US-Caribbean partnerships on food security should, however, reflect the nuances of the food insecurity challenge in the region, particularly as it relates food insecurity differences across age spectrums. One of the main reasons for this is that many households cannot afford adequate and nutritious food—the poor struggle with food access (Robinson et al., in prep). Lack of food affordability is strongly linked to prevalence of undernutrition, child stunting and adult obesity (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020). Additionally, the Caribbean has higher overweight and obesity prevalence than the world, with adult obesity in 2016 at 13.1% in the world, and 24.7% in the Caribbean (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020). Children under five overweight prevalence was 7% in the Caribbean in 2019, and 5.6% globally (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2020). The cost of an energy-sufficient diet is out of reach for many, and some of the highest costs are in the Caribbean (Robinson et al., in prep). These costs represent a significant proportion of household food expenditures and indicate the percent of the population for which the costs are unaffordable (Robinson et al., in prep). For a healthy diet, which in the Caribbean is nearly four times the cost of an energy-sufficient diet, this cost amounts to 50- 200% of household food expenditures, and in particularly at-risk Caribbean countries such as Haiti, most of the population cannot afford this expense (Robinson et al., in prep).

A third gap is the clustering of food security, climate adaptation and resilience, and disaster and emergency preparedness—the Citizen Advisory Group is of the view that these should be treated as separate issues, potentially as three separate pillars, to reflect the importance of each of them to the region's development. Future US-Caribbean initiatives on climate adaptation and resilience would need to pay attention to the following facts, for example:

- Some countries (e.g. Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, and St. Lucia) are more advanced adaptors, while others (e.g. Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) are less advanced (Robinson, 2020).
- More adaptations are happening in some sectors in the region (e.g. coastal zone, forestry and agriculture, tourism, and water), making them more advanced than others (e.g. finance, social) (Robinson, 2018). However, more recent anecdotal evidence suggests that national and subnational adaptations in the tourism sector may be lagging (Robinson, pers comm), which is especially concerning seeing that the Inter-American Development Bank's Tourism Dependency Index shows that 10 of the 20 tourism-dependent economies worldwide are located in the Caribbean (Insanally and Mowla, 2022).
- There is no consistent interpretation of the word 'resilience' among Caribbean policy- and decision-makers (Saxena et al., 2018).
- There are valid critiques about whether the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre is best placed to implement on-the-ground climate adaptation projects (Robinson and Gilfillan, 2017).

Finally, another gap is that there are no clear mechanisms for information dissemination—the main source of information is seemingly the US Department of State's website and the links provided there do not all lead to live, up-to-date webpages. And while the PACC 2030 fact sheets are helpful, there is no feasible and cost-effective way to independently verify whether activities have actually been implemented, as described and/or reported. In some instances, multiple internet searches retrieved no results. Better information dissemination could serve as a means of increasing stakeholder participation.

Here, it will be important for future US-Caribbean initiatives to include a "free and fair mechanism for inclusion", and also to work towards breaking down the barriers to inclusive participation, including the ones that impose limits based on one's political affiliation(s).

PILLAR 4: DEEPENING COLLABORATION WITH CARIBBEAN PARTNERS

Aims of the pillar: The fourth pillar of PACC 2030 addresses the need for collaboration between the US Government and partners in the region. Some of the initiatives under Pillar 4 include but are not limited to (The White House, 2022a):

- Discussing further engagements with the private sector through the US-Caribbean Leader Engagement at the Summit of the Americas.
- Convening panels on Caribbean clean energy and climate adaptation and resilience between the US and the Dominican Republic.
- Promoting the use of sustainable energy and supporting economic growth and social development through the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.
- Fostering joint research, training, and engagement through the Caribbean Regional Climate Outlook Forum.

PACC 2030 activities and updates: The work under Pillar 4, which has the least publicly-available information, is based on diplomatic efforts led by various high-ranking US officials, including Special Presidential Advisor for the Americas Chris Dodd, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry (now resigned), US Export-Import Bank President and Chair of the Board of Directors Reta Jo Lewis, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Brian A. Nichols, and US Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro (US Department of State, 2024). In The Bahamas, for example, a partnership between the US Naval Postgraduate School and the University of The Bahamas is being pursued (US Department of State, 2024). To the Citizen Advisory Group, this pillar provided the strongest evidence of the initiative's marginalization of local priorities and civil society organizations.

As one Group Member powerfully said, "PACC 2030 cannot be a true partnership if it does not include civil society".

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PACC 2030 is a recent and welcomed commitment under the Biden-Harris administration. However, there are concerns that it will not achieve its desired ends unless it meaningfully engages civil society stakeholders, given that the impacts of climate change often overlap with and deepen existing inequities along the lines of race and ethnicity, colorism, socio-economic status, and gender (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023). Tackling this blind spot, the Citizen Advisory Group has said, requires facilitating the participation of historically marginalized groups such as women, youth, and rural populations, including subsistence farmers, who are already disproportionately experiencing the impacts of climate change (Inter-American Dialogue, 2023).

Gaps in US aid programs in the Caribbean region

At the partnership level, the three major gaps are that:

- **PACC 2030 is a relatively unknown initiative** among the major non-governmental organizations working in the relevant sectors in the Caribbean region. Additionally, there are **no clear mechanisms for information dissemination**—the main source of information is seemingly the US Department of State's website and the links provided there do not all lead to live, up-to-date webpages.

- Civil society stakeholders believe that **PACC 2030's focus on national governments and the private sector,** while targeting two highly relevant changemakers, **will significantly reduce its chances of on-the-ground success** because the extent to which it is being driven by local priorities and local actors (as opposed to those at the national level) is uncertain. PACC 2030 largely excludes civil society stakeholders who have the knowledge and experience to address the issues identified. This and future partnerships would, therefore, benefit from involving them in the early stages of programming when objectives and interventions are being planned.

- For civil society stakeholders, there are **concerns about whether PACC 2030 is a duplication and/or repackaging of previous US Government initiatives** that were either terminated early or that did not meet their intended objectives.

At the pillar level, the gaps include:

- **Pillar 1** (Improving Access to Development Financing) **almost exclusively focusing on just three countries** – Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica – and excluding the others, though there is some attention on the Dominican Republic.

  - Its focus areas do not reflect the current socio-economic realities of the region.
  - It does not have an emphasis on addressing some of the overarching issues with international finance that policy- and decision-makers in the Caribbean have identified, including direct access.
  - It emphasizes debt, but in a marginal way, and ignores broader issues of international climate and debt (in)justice in the Caribbean.

- **Pillar 2** (Facilitating Clean Energy Project Development and Investment) **not targeting the main hydrocarbon producers in the region** (Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname) for single country support.

  - There are gaps in attention to specific energy sources, particularly wind.
  - There is limited attention to promoting economic incentives and instruments (e.g. feed-in tariffs and tax credits).
  - There is also limited attention to the countries where energy insecurity is highest (e.g.

Haiti), and to underserved communities and marginalized populations in various countries.

- The development of energy projects should be seen as a process that must include citizen consultations, environmental assessments, respect of protected lands and fragile ecosystems, and regard to biodiversity.

- **Pillar 3** (Food Security and Enhancing Local Capacity for Climate Adaptation and Resilience) **reflecting a "double count" of initiatives** that started well before PACC 2030 was announced in June 2022.
  - It excludes islands with major food security needs.
  - Its clustering of food security, climate adaptation and resilience, and disaster and emergency preparedness, disregarding the importance of each of them to the region's development.

- **Pillar 4** (Deepening Collaboration with Caribbean Partner) being high-level and **marginalizing local priorities** and civil society organizations.
  - The definition of partners does not include civil society, which should be seen as a key stakeholder in US-Caribbean initiatives.

Centering Equity and Justice in US-Caribbean Initiatives

Given the history of the US in the Caribbean, civil society stakeholders are concerned about the ability of programming to center equity and justice, particularly with respect to acknowledging the lasting impacts of the region's experience of colonialism and neocolonialism, and reinforcing the calls from Caribbean feminist and youth movements for the dismantling of patriarchal and neocolonial systems, especially those related to development finance. This requires a firm understanding of the three considerations underlying the demands for climate justice in the region.

The first consideration is that Caribbean countries, given their size and colonial histories, did little to contribute to the climate crisis and perhaps with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, have maintained very low per capita greenhouse gas emissions. Industrialized countries such as the US attained developed country status at the expense of low-emitting but resource rich countries in the periphery. Considering cumulative emissions over the last two hundred years, for example, the US is among the top five countries with responsibility for the climate crisis and would be expected to take the lead on financing climate action (mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage) in developing countries, including those in the Caribbean.

The second consideration is that, despite their negligible contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, Caribbean countries are being disproportionately impacted by climate change. Working Group II's contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was released in February 2022, provided evidence that the intensity and intensification rates of tropical cyclones have increased in the past 40 years globally, and among the 29 small island developing states in the Caribbean, 22 were affected by at least one Category 4 or 5 cyclone in 2017 (Mycoo et al., 2022). Lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater reservoirs on small islands are among the most threatened freshwater systems on the planet (Mycoo et al., 2022). Furthermore, there is considerable subnational variability with some locations and groups projected to experience more severe climate impacts than others.

The third consideration is that, given their disproportionate vulnerability, Caribbean countries are burdened with the cost of responding to various climate, climate-related and climate-amplified events. Haiti, for example, is a low-income economy, which qualifies for grants and concessional financing, but with development challenges, including civil unrest. In many instances, upper middle-income and high-income countries such as Jamaica and Barbados, respectively, are forced to apply for loans, often at market rates. For context, between 70-90% of climate finance globally is provided in the form of loans (Oxfam, 2023).

The average debt to gross domestic product ratio in the Caribbean rose from 75% in 2019 to 99% in 2020 and is estimated to have fallen to 77% at the end of 2023 (Inter-American Development Bank, 2023). The sharpest declines were observed in Guyana between 2020 and 2022 and in Jamaica between 2010 and 2019 (Inter-American Development Bank, 2023). Of special note is Guyana's recent oil discovery, while complicating the calls for climate justice in the region and for reparations from former colonizing countries such as the United Kingdom, is

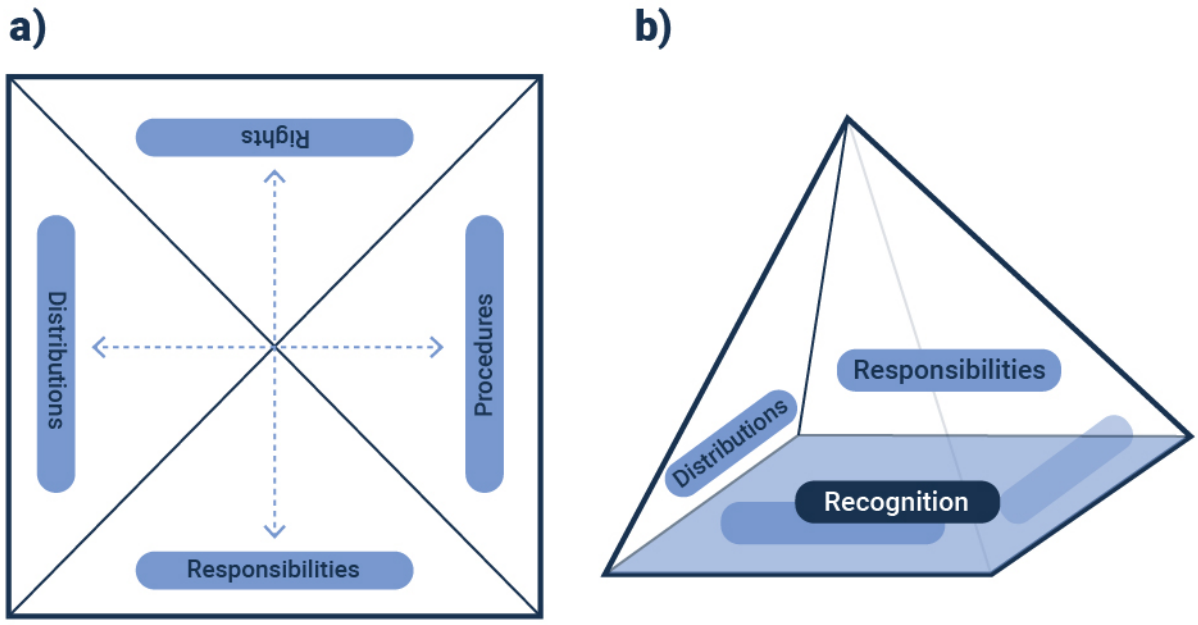
expected to increase the country's gross domestic product by around 34% and further reduce pressures on its external debt.

Throughout meetings, the Citizen Advisory Group worked on a series of principles that, based on climate justice, should guide all US initiatives in the Caribbean:

- Distributions/distributive justice (benefits from climate actions are distributed fairly).
- Procedures/procedural justice (the most vulnerable and other groups on the frontlines are engaged in the decision-making process).
- Rights (the vulnerable are protected from (dangerous) climate change).
- Responsibilities/reparative/restorative justice (those who are responsible for climate change/emissions are responsible for repairing harms).
- Recognition/recognition justice (emphasizes the recognition of human dignity and of the difference between the dominant society and subaltern groups).

These dimensions can be illustrated by the three-dimensional climate justice pyramid viewed from (a)

FIGURE 4: THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL CLIMATE JUSTICE PYRAMID
Source: Bulkeley et al., 2014, p. 34



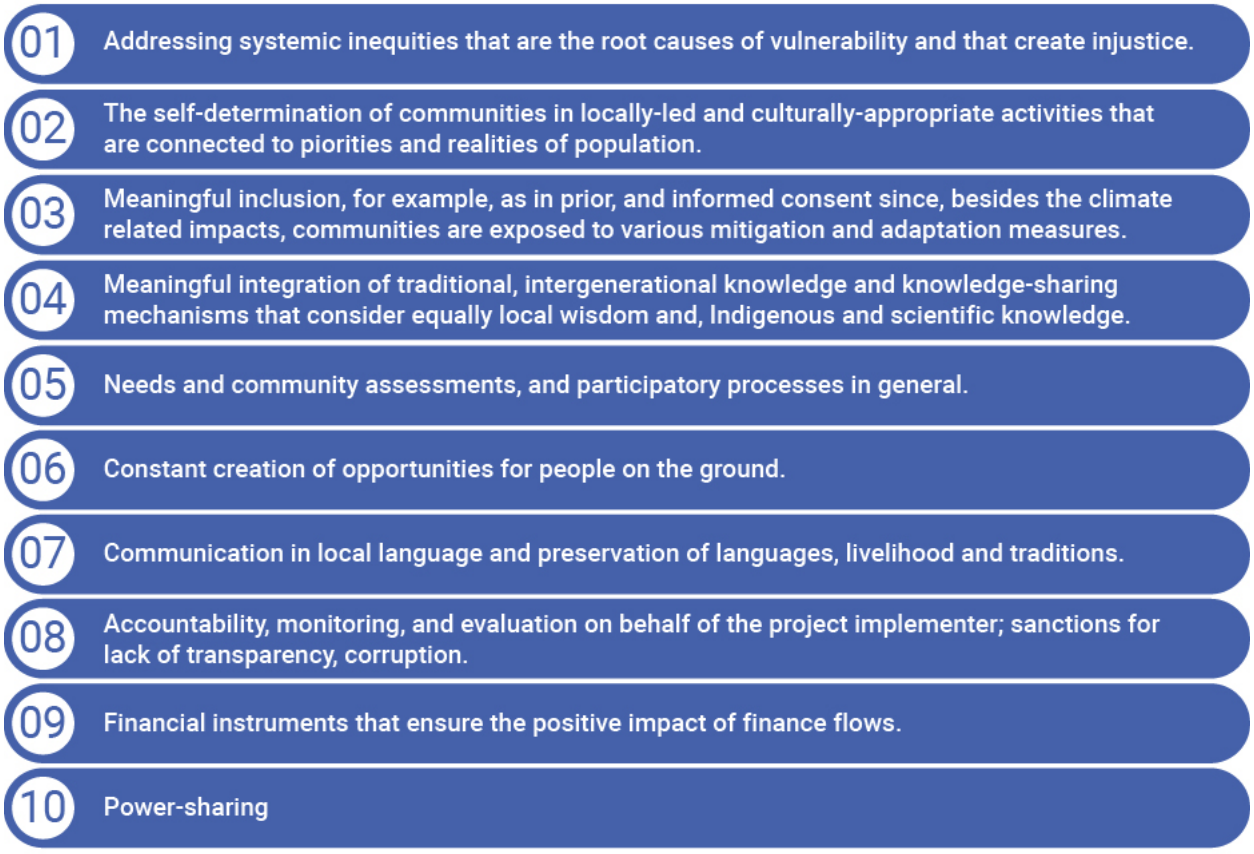
directly above, and (b) obliquely below (see Figure 4 below).

Members of the Citizen Advisory Group argued that, as a process, climate justice entails incorporating, in various areas of local, national, and international decision making, the notion that the climate crisis has disproportionate effects on the most vulnerable, across and within nations. As such, climate justice-driven projects address historical and structural factors recognizing the histories of colonialism, and geographic disparities and cultural diversity. Future US-Caribbean initiatives should take note of the defining characteristics of climate justice-driven processes and outcomes, including:

- The acknowledgement that the climate crisis was caused by the developed world, and has a clear connection to colonialism. Therefore, it is vital to consider projects as reparative justice, not aid.
- The promotion of equity, inclusion, and representation.
- A pro-poor and rights-based approach (human, economic, environmental, social, land rights).
- Cultural sensitivity and appropriateness.

Climate justice-driven policies and plans incorporate the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, women, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disability, youth, low-income sectors, the elderly, and migrants. However, there must be broad social inclusion and benefits for the general population as well.

FIGURE 5: TEN PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR THE CARIBBEAN
Source: Citizen Advisory Group



For the Citizen Advisory Group, there are 10 practical aspects of climate justice for programming in the Caribbean (see Figure 5 below).

According to the Dialogue's Citizen Advisory Group, climate justice implies rethinking the following structures and definitions globally. First, whereas international climate finance initiatives are necessary, the goal should be to empower the Caribbean region to break dependency and generate its own finance. Second, it is imperative to redefine criteria for receiving international funds, which currently classify most Caribbean nations as high- and middle-income countries based on per capita gross domestic product. Third, project planners and implementers should abandon the false assumption that funding to large public sector projects will automatically trickle down to cover needs on the ground and start funding grassroots projects. And lastly, both the Global North and Global South must reassess our development model and change it from one that is profit-based to one that promotes the harmonious co-existence of the human species with our natural environment and protects and conserves biodiversity.

A Roadmap for Future Caribbean Policy Improvements

PACC 2030 and future initiatives to support climate action in the Caribbean region need a roadmap for helping ensure that resources are invested optimally. This will involve a structured approach to identifying, prioritizing, and implementing policy changes to address specific challenges or achieve desired outcomes:

- **Problem identification and analysis:** Identifying a clear project lead, the initiative's target audience, and the specific in-country beneficiaries. Defining the climate change challenges in specific countries in the region.
  - » Identifying specific climate change impacts affecting different countries, communities, households and individuals, such as sea-level rise, extreme weather events, changes in precipitation patterns, and temperature increases.
  - » Assessing the socio-economic, environmental, and health implications of these impacts, especially on marginalized populations, including women, youth, subsistence farmers, small business owners, and Indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups.
  - » Carrying out local need assessments using data but also with methodologies like surveys, participant observation, interviews, and round tables with local leaders.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Identifying local climate stakeholders, beyond national governments and especially civil society organizations and marginalized populations, in each country:
  - » Deeply engaging them, including in other stages of project development (e.g. feasibility assessments, environmental impact assessments, health impact assessments). Perhaps mobilizing the US Peace Corps in support of this.
  - » Paying special attention to incorporating Indigenous groups and First peoples (e.g. Garifuna in Belize, Amerindians in Guyana, and Kalinago in Dominica) to ensure that local and traditional knowledge is incorporated into program activities. As one Group Member put it in a meeting, "There is much appetite for participation".
- **Goal setting and prioritization:** Centering equity and justice. Conducting comprehensive needs assessment both at national and local levels, in consultation with stakeholders. Setting clear and ambitious goals for climate mitigation and adaptation (including resilience-building efforts), aligned with international commitments such as the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement and the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- **Policy development and analysis:** Developing comprehensive climate action plans that integrate climate mitigation and adaptation into development planning across climate-sensitive sectors such as energy, food and agriculture, water resources, coastal zone management, tourism, and transportation. Ensuring policy coherence and alignment with international climate commitments, including those communicated to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through Nationally Determined Contributions.

- **Legislative and regulatory processes:** Helping to develop and enact climate change laws and policies that establish clear mandates, targets, and timelines for emissions reductions, adaptation measures, and resilience-building efforts. Also helping to promote a variety of direct regulations (e.g. standards) and economic incentives and instruments (e.g. feed-in tariffs and tax credits), as appropriate, placing sufficient attention on the countries where needs are greatest, and prioritizing energy access for underserved communities and marginalized populations. Reforming far-reaching US laws (e.g. the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act) that can help increase fiscal space in the Caribbean alongside the ease of "doing business" and the volume of investments in critical areas such as climate action.

- **Implementation:** Investing in local capacity-building initiatives to strengthen local institutional capacities and technical expertise, especially for applying for international grant funding. Establishing dedicated funding mechanisms. Promoting technology transfer and innovation in support of climate mitigation and adaptation actions.

- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Helping to develop a set of climate indicators to monitor progress towards climate goals and track key performance metrics, such as greenhouse gas emissions, adaptation outcomes, and climate resilience indicators. Conducting timely evaluations and reviews to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of climate programming in the region. Using evaluation findings to inform policy adjustments and strategic decision-making.

- **Iteration:** Embracing adaptive governance approaches that allow for flexibility, learning, and adaptive management in response to evolving climate risks, scientific knowledge, and stakeholder feedback.

CONCLUSION

This review of PACC 2030 underscores both the strides made and the notable gaps that persist in addressing key development challenges in the Caribbean region. While efforts to enhance development finance, facilitate clean energy project development, ensure food security and enhance local capacity for climate adaptation and resilience, and deepen collaboration with Caribbean partners have been evident, there remains a pressing need for more comprehensive and sustained engagement, particularly efforts that holistically involve civil society.

The analysis in this report reveals that development finance initiatives often lack the depth and scalability required to catalyze transformative change, particularly in sectors vital to sustainable development. Similarly, while strides have been made in promoting clean energy solutions, barriers such as limited access to technology and financing hinder widespread adoption. Moreover, challenges related to food security persist, exacerbated by climate change, limited infrastructure, and economic vulnerabilities. And civil society organizations are typically not viewed as US Government partners, resulting in the proliferation of top-down initiatives that do not center the needs of the people.

Addressing these gaps necessitates a multifaceted approach that prioritizes collaboration, innovation, and targeted investments in countries that need them the most, while bearing in mind that specific local context require careful consideration and tailored approaches based on the challenges involved. Strengthening partnerships with civil society actors, in particular, can enhance coordination and leverage local resources more effectively. Furthermore, investing in capacity-building initiatives, promoting the transfer of finance and technology, and fostering economic growth that includes marginalized groups such as Indigenous communities are all essential to maximizing the region's development "wins" and unlocking its full potential.

In navigating the complexities of historical and contemporary US-Caribbean relations, it is imperative to adopt a holistic approach that integrates development priorities with broader geopolitical considerations. By addressing the gaps identified in this report and harnessing opportunities for collaboration, the US can play a more pivotal role in promoting shared prosperity across the region.

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APPENDIX 1: MEMBERS OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP

- Stacey-Ann Pi Osoria, Founder, Emergency Management Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago
- Tamisha Lee, President, Jamaican Network of Rural Women Producers, Jamaica
- Immaculata Casimero, Communications Officer, South Rupununi District Council; Member, Wapichan Wiizi Women's Movement, Guyana
- Brandon Walker, Founder and President, barbudanGO, Antigua and Barbuda
- Ifạ́sínà Efunyemi, Teacher of History and Caribbean Studies, Ecumenical Junior College, Belize
- Christine Samwaroo, Founder, The Breadfruit Collective, Guyana
- Eduardo Julia, Vice Director for Strategic Issues, Fundación Sur Futuro, Dominican Republic
- Christon Herbert, Program Manager, Caribbean Policy Development Centre, Barbados
- Ché Greenidge, Executive Director, Barbados Environmental Conservation Trust, Barbados
- Ardene Sirjoo, Communications Lead, The Cropper Foundation, Trinidad and Tobago
- Ainka Granderson, Resilience Program Lead, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Trinidad and Tobago
- Sandra Prospere, Chairperson, Fond St. Jacques, St. Lucia
- Naomi Bannis, President, Anse Kounari Tourism Association, Dominica
- Ayesha Constable, Founder, Young People for Climate Action; Co-founder, GirlsCARE, Jamaica
- Keithlin Caroo, Founding and Executive Director, Helen's Daughters, St. Lucia

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