



Water’s potential role in supporting a green economy in Barbados

Adrian Cashman, CERMES - University of the West Indies

Market Place Session: Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Case Study

Basic information about the case	
Name of the case	Water’s potential role in supporting a Green Economy in Barbados
Type of tool (green jobs; cost recovery and financing, economic instruments in water management; technology; investments in biodiversity conservation and improvement, water planning)	Water planning
Type of issue addressed (watersheds, industry, agriculture, cities)	Cities and Agriculture
Region	Latin America and the Caribbean
The case	
What was the issue addressed?	Barbados is a water scarce and densely populated Small Island Developing State (SIDS) with an open economy dependent on tourism and its use of its tropical island attributes, the importation of fossil fuels and a substantial part of its nutritional needs. The challenge facing the country is how to respond in a way that is sustainable, provides increased employment opportunities in a way that does not compromise the country’s environmental resources whilst at the same time optimising their use and contributes to the well-being of citizens.
What was the change towards green growth?	In 2009 the then Prime Minister announced his vision for Barbados to become “the most environmentally advanced green country in Latin America and the Caribbean”. Following this the Government of Barbados initiated a Scoping Study to map out how the late Prime Minister’s vision



	could be achieved.
What and who were the drivers for change?	The drivers for change have been the late Prime Minister Hon D Thompson. The commitment has been reiterated by the current Government, through the Prime Minister and the Minister for Environment and Drainage. Barbados has a track record of championing environmental issues and concerns on the international stage and domestically successive Barbadian governments have sought to promote environmentally responsible development through national development plans, policies and projects. The current initiative needs to be seen as a continuation of this commitment.
What were the challenges faced in making the change? (barriers/problems)	The need for better institutional coordination and the uptake and mainstreaming of 'green' policies. Limited economic resources for implementation. A need for better public awareness and change of mindset as well as greater private sector involvement. What constitutes a green economy is not uniformly well understood and therefore the ability to translate understanding into action is limited.
How did the tool help overcome the barriers and generate change?	The current study is starting and has identified opportunities as well as barriers as a first step to addressing how change can be brought about and the resources necessary.
What are the lessons learnt? Positive and negative? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance changes that have facilitated the change (legal, public role, stakeholder participation, social relationships, regulation, financing). • Political economy (actors, interests and power) • Issues of policy coherence, integration and impacts on other sectors • Scaling up and relevance for developing and 	It is clear from the Scoping Study that the legal and especially the regulatory institutions have to be adapted to be supportive of green initiatives and that a higher priority needs to be assigned to such changes to enable them to become part of an engine for growth. At the same time there is a need to be more inclusive of the private sector in areas that have previously been the preserve of government in service provision and this will need a change in mindset on the part of both government and private sector. A key challenge is the creation of a supportive set of financial instruments that lowers



<p>transition countries</p>	<p>the cost of adoption and implementation for all parties.</p> <p>Whilst there is a commitment on the part of senior decision-makers there is some suggestion from the study that where there is a perception on the part of middle managers that adoption of green orientated policies might increase costs then there is a reluctance to implement them. Furthermore the need for greater environmental protection is on the one hand not always properly appreciated but on the other there is a tendency in some sectors to be conservatively prescriptive.</p> <p>Policy coherence and coordination emerged as an area where more attention is required.</p> <p>It is anticipated that some of the outcomes with respect to how water planning and management can be promoted will be of relevance to other developing and transition countries.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	
<p>Impacts on the economy (jobs, business creation, creation of financing institutions/development of existing ones, other direct and indirect effects, macro, trade); benefits for the environment; social impacts including effects on poverty reduction.</p>	<p>It is currently too early to tell what the impact might be on the creation of new employment and business opportunities though it is expected that the promotion of a green economy will lead to new employment opportunities. Already a Centre for the promotion and support for transitioning existing businesses to green economic practices is being discussed. The potential benefits to the environment have been identified and this is especially important given the existing stress that existing economic activity is responsible for, the limited endowment of certain key natural resources and their vulnerability.</p>