



A two-day High Level EU- Caribbean Sustainable Energy Conference was held on October 10-11, 2016 in Bridgetown Barbados. This conference was primarily focused on CARICOM/CARIFORUM and EU relations. However both the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) as well as the French Overseas Regions (ORs) were invited to partake in the conference. The inclusion of all groupings in the region were to impress that energy supply vulnerability and fossil fuel dependence is not only a problem of the CARIFORUM countries but that of the entire Caribbean. This event was also a means to set the stage for wider regional cooperation specifically in the area of energy.

Guyana was represented by its Minister of Public Infrastructure, David Patterson and Minister of Natural Resources, Raphael Trotman while from the Dutch OCTs the Prime Minister of Sint Maarten, William Marlin attended.

The 11th EDF Caribbean Regional Programme will also aim to dedicate a significant portion of the € 40 million envelopes to Sustainable Energy increase in the Caribbean OCTs. The programming process is still ongoing with as goal to sign the financing agreement near the middle of next year. In the spirit of wider regional cooperation and in the understanding of the related climate change issues that will affect all Small Island Developing States, the Caribbean OCTs have agreed to explore options to blend the funds of the programmes in the area of Knowledge Development. As such, this conference provided an unparalleled opportunity to not only engage with regional partners but moreover to identify the most effective areas for cooperation. Sustainable energy companies from around the world also attended this event as speakers and participants, but also with their exhibitions in a parallel Business Opportunities Forum. This was an extra advantage of the conference as there was the possibility of engaging with existing companies for both access to the technology and possible investments.

Key outcomes of the conference were the signing of the “Joint Declaration on Sustainable Energy between the European Union, European Investment Bank and CARIFORUM on reinforced cooperation in the field of sustainable energy”. Further, five support programs in the renewable energy sector for the region, totaling 54 million EUROS were also signed during this conference. These agreements are evidence of the European Union’s commitment to supporting Caribbean countries in meeting their obligations stipulated in Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.