

Marine Conservation in the Caribbean: Strategies for Resilience, Collaboration, and Sustainable Financing

The 2025 Marine Conservation Forum, hosted by the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, held in Grenada, convened over 50 Caribbean stakeholders, including National Conservation Trust Funds (NCTFs), government agencies, NGOs, and development partners. The three-day event served as a strategic platform to strengthen regional collaboration, build capacity, and accelerate marine conservation financing and implementation — particularly in pursuit of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 30x30 targets.

Date and Location

 May 7–9, 2025
 Grenada

Total Number of Participants

 **16** Male
 **30** Female

Conservation Trust Funds Represented

 **10** Including CBF

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We need to step out of our conservation bubble and get to the real world... Our resilience is in making sugarcane and molasses into rum—we must return to that creativity in policy and action.

— Ruleta Camacho
 (Climate Ambassador, Antigua & Barbuda),
 Marine Conservation in the Caribbean Forum
 May 8, 2025

Translating global biodiversity frameworks into national realities is never easy but that's where regional cooperation becomes not just useful, but essential.

— Susana Pereira
 (UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat),
 Marine Conservation in the Caribbean Forum
 May 8, 2025

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Key Outcomes and Takeaways



Regional Financing Architecture

Participants agreed on the need for establishing a regional Marine Protected Areas Financing Facility and a Blue Economy Hub to strengthen sustainable marine management. Success will rely on inclusive governance, operational clarity, and alignment with national priorities and NCTF capacities.

Equity, Community Participation & Traditional Knowledge

Case studies from Grenada, Dominica, and the Grenadines highlighted co-management models that center fisherfolk, youth, and community voices. The Forum emphasized integrating traditional knowledge, equitable benefit-sharing, mental health considerations, and disaster resilience into MPA management.



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The global biodiversity finance gap is \$700 billion. If we don't access and align our national strategies, we'll be left out of the funding that shapes the future.

— **Patrick Williams**
(Biodiversity Expert),
Marine Conservation in the
Caribbean Forum
May 8, 2025

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Strategic Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

There was strong consensus on the need for standardized regional indicators and harmonized data systems to track 30x30 commitments. Integrating local ecological knowledge and well-being metrics alongside biodiversity outcomes was a key recommendation.

2

Stronger Communication & Political Visibility

Stakeholders agreed to develop regional advocacy campaigns and shared messaging tools to elevate marine conservation in public and political spaces, with regular coordination meetings in the lead-up to the United Nations Oceans Conference 2025.



4



Aligning National & Global Frameworks

The Forum urged countries to integrate biodiversity priorities into national budgets and policy frameworks. Multisectoral collaboration involving environment, finance, and planning ministries was deemed essential to meet GBF 30x30 targets.

5



Key Outcomes and Takeaways



Day 1:

Validated MPA coverage gaps, explored innovative financing (blue bonds, ecotourism, debt-for-nature swaps), and shared grassroots management best practices.

Day 2:

Focused on biodiversity frameworks, regional financing strategies, and standardized 30x30 measurement.

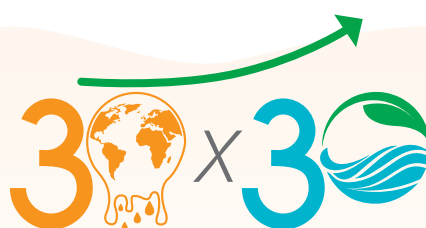
Day 3:

Addressed gender-responsive financing and conducted NCTF-focused technical working sessions on financial architecture and grant performance.

Capacity Building & Participant Feedback



100% satisfaction for the whole forum; consistently strong positive feedback across all days.



Notable increases in knowledge of 30x30 targets, biodiversity reporting, and financing tools.



Clear appetite for ongoing peer exchange, interactive sessions, and technical support.

Recommendations & Next Steps



CBF to advance the MPA Financing Facility and Blue Economy Hub with inclusive, locally informed governance as there is a clear need for coordinating fundraising efforts for effective management of Marine Protected Areas.

1



Recommendations & Next Steps



Embed equity and community participation at the core of marine conservation strategies.

2



Standardize M&E frameworks with regionally aligned indicators and participatory data systems.

3



Boost regional narratives and advocacy in preparation for United Nations Oceans Conference (June 2025).

4



Institutionalize biodiversity integration into national policies, budgets, and multisectoral planning.

5

Closing Reflections

The CBF organized forum reaffirmed the Caribbean's collective leadership in marine conservation finance, emphasizing innovation, inclusivity, and tangible action. The Caribbean Biodiversity Fund and partners committed to sustaining this collaborative momentum toward achieving regional and global conservation goals.



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Donors

