



Assessing vulnerability to climate change in the Blanchisseuse community, Trinidad and Tobago

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and Fisheries Division - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Trinidad engaged fisherfolk and their organisations, other community members and the public and private sector in Blanchisseuse in 2020 to assess the vulnerability of their fisheries and wider community to climate change and identify priorities for adaptation.

How was vulnerability to climate change assessed?

The assessment utilised three tools, participatory geographic information systems (GIS), surveys and an impact and capacity matrix for data collection and analysis. Each tool is explained briefly:

- 1. Participatory GIS** used paper maps printed to scale to capture and integrate local and scientific knowledge on resource use, livelihoods and areas critical to the fisheries sector with community stakeholders. The paper maps were then converted to digital maps that can be compared and integrated with other GIS and technical data to support planning and decision-making.
- 2. Surveys** collected information and perspectives from fisherfolk and the wider community on attitudes/ perceptions, environmental, economic, social and political issues shaping vulnerability to climate change at the local level.
- 3. Impact and capacity matrix** allowed for identification of the hazards that have the most serious impact on the community, who and what are most vulnerable, and existing and potential coping and adaptation strategies to address these hazards. This supported prioritisation of needs and actions.



Key climate change impacts identified by Blanchisseuse stakeholders



Rough seas, storms and storm surges



Sargassum influx impacting fishers and coastal areas



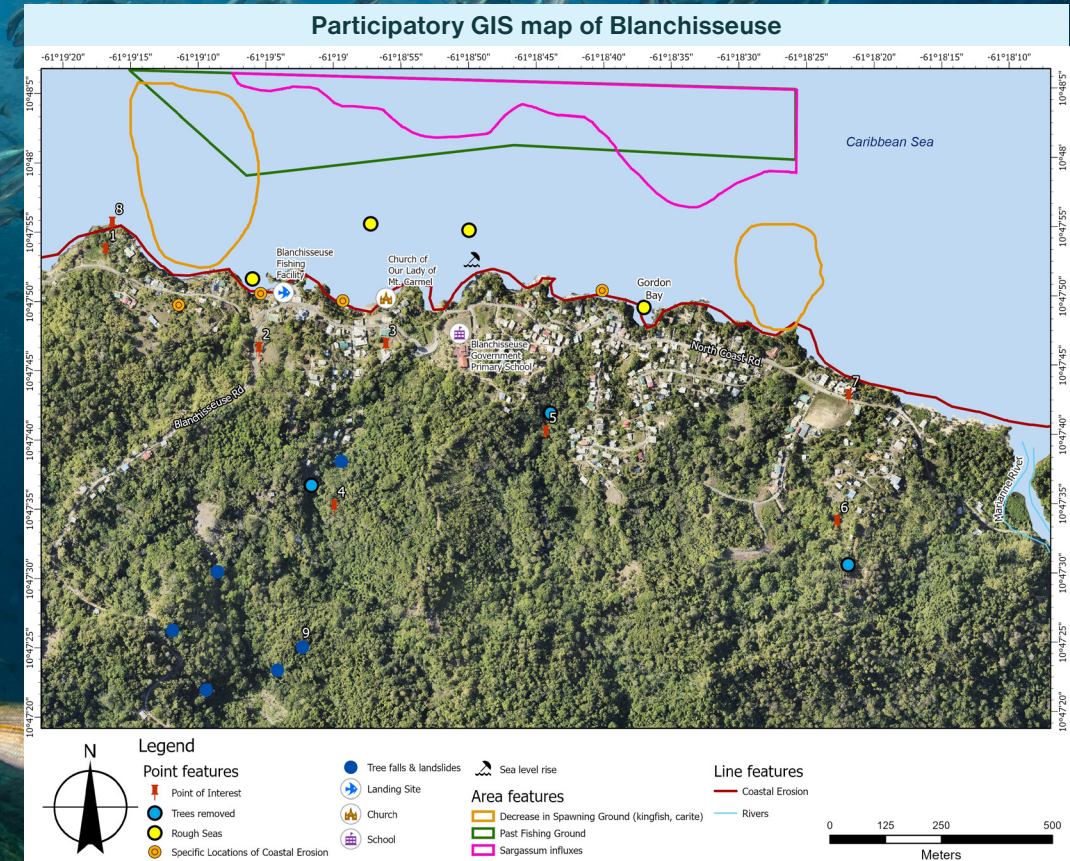
Heavy rainfall impacting community infrastructure and livelihoods



Inland flooding, particularly along riverbanks



Landslides impacting houses, businesses and people



Adaptation priorities for the Blanchisseuse community

- improve management to address landslides, particularly along sole access route to community;
- improve access to insurance by fisherfolk to help buffer losses;
- improve fishing facilities, repair the existing ramp and provide safe harbour for boats; and
- improve enforcement of laws/regulations regarding coastal and inland development.