



FAO and the Green Climate Fund boost climate action in Small Island Developing States

Unlocking climate finance for Small Island Developing States

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are on the front line of the climate emergency, bearing the brunt of more frequent extreme weather events, increasing temperatures, and sea level rise, all of which threaten people's livelihoods and food security. With a population of about 65 million, SIDS are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change because of their small geographical area, isolation, and limited natural resources, and yet they produce just one percent of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Targeted investments in sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture are critical to increasing the food, nutrition and water security of vulnerable communities in SIDS. To this end, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) works with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) – the world's largest dedicated fund for climate action – to accelerate SIDS' access to climate finance for projects that help make the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.

How FAO increases climate finance flows to SIDS

In its role as a GCF Accredited Entity (AE), FAO provides SIDS with the necessary support to develop funding proposals for high-impact adaptation and mitigation projects with low to medium levels of environmental and social risk and up to USD 250 million in grants and co-financing. FAO's GCF project portfolio – valued at USD 1.2 billion – includes a USD 119 million dollar project in Cuba aimed at enhancing climate-resilient production techniques to improve access to water, create employment opportunities, and strengthen local food production systems for greater food security.

FAO also serves as a Delivery Partner for the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, which provides grants for projects that strengthen institutional capacity, governance mechanisms, and planning and programming frameworks in accordance with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and other national climate change strategies. Twelve of the projects in FAO's USD 55.6 million readiness portfolio directly support SIDS; three of these projects – in Belize, Grenada and Saint Lucia – are designed to strengthen NAPs and adaptation planning processes.



Enhancing climate resilience in Cuba

FAO has been working closely with the Government of Cuba to make the country's agriculture sector more inclusive, sustainable and resilient to the impacts of climate change with the project called, "Increased climate resilience of rural households and communities through the rehabilitation of production landscapes in selected localities of the Republic of Cuba (IRES)".

As a Small Island Developing State, Cuba is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Rising average temperatures, prolonged periods of drought, and decreased rainfall will have a negative impact on agriculture, reducing the productivity of staple crops such as rice and beans, and threatening the livelihoods of family farmers, thus putting food security at risk.

With USD 119 million in grants and co-financing allocated to the project, IRES has enormous potential to make agricultural production more climate resilient in seven municipalities vulnerable to climate change in Cuba. Project activities aimed at restoring productive landscapes and preserving ecosystem services stand to benefit about 52 000 family farmers.

The introduction of agroforestry practices on 35 000 hectares will also enable the country to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions: 2.7 million tonnes of emissions will be avoided through more climate-resilient production techniques, silvopastoral systems, reforestation and assisted natural forest regeneration.



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GCF readiness grants for inclusive climate action in SIDS

In SIDS, women make up 52 percent of the agricultural workforce, yet they have less access than men to land, resources and credit. Readiness projects can bring inequalities to light, for example, by assessing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and men so that a gender action plan can be integrated into projects.

FAO is the Delivery Partner of a GCF readiness project in Saint Lucia that aims to address the gender gap by empowering women in the fisheries sector. Under the project, women and men will receive targeted training on the impacts of climate change, such as the damage and loss of coral, mangrove and seagrass ecosystems, which are vital fish nursery and breeding habitats; they will also learn strategies that will help them adapt and diversify their income, including ways to increase fuel efficiency to reduce costs and GHG emissions.

In Cabo Verde, where more than 80 percent of the population live in coastal areas, women play a pivotal role in the trading network of fresh, salted, dried or smoked fish. The country's first GCF readiness project, with FAO as the Delivery Partner, will help improve the livelihoods of women, men and youth by identifying the key fish species that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – in terms of abundance, growth, migration and catchability – and promote ocean-based food security through sustainable fishing practices.



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About the Green Climate Fund

The Green Climate Fund is the world's largest dedicated fund for climate action. It was established as the financing mechanism for the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2010, tasked with supporting developing and transition countries as they scale up their efforts to meet the Paris Agreement target of keeping the global temperature rise well below 2° Celsius.

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