

Japan's Grant Aid
“The Project for Improving National Sargassum
Management Capacities in the Caribbean”
in Collaboration with UNDP



From left: Ms. Valerie Cliff, Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean
Hon. Adrian Forde, Minister of Environment and National Beautification in Barbados
H.E. Mr. Teruhiko Shinada, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados

On 18 February 2022, a signing ceremony and Exchange of Notes for grant assistance on “The Project for Improving National Sargassum Management Capacities in the Caribbean” was held at UN House in Barbados. There, Ms. Valerie Cliff, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean and H.E. Mr. SHINADA Teruhiko, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados affirmed their commitments to supporting the region in its quest to find solutions to the growing problem of Sargassum seaweed that has been plaguing regional coastlines since 2011.

The three-year project, which seeks to assist with sargassum management, targets Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, is valued at US\$12.3 million. The project aims to support the enhancement of national capacity for the removal and disposal of Sargassum, by providing these 5 countries with Sargassum removal and collection machinery, which will be further strengthened through comprehensive training and capacity-development programmes. The project will also explore scientific monitoring technologies such as UAS drones and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) spatial mapping tools to evaluate the quantum of Sargassum influx. In addition, site-specific Sargassum collection and management plans to minimize beach erosion and sea turtle nesting sites will be developed in each territory.

H.E. Mr. SHINADA Teruhiko stated, “I am pleased to launch this Grant-Aid Project in partnership with UNDP. The Project, financed by Japan and implemented by UNDP, aims to support the efforts to tackle the challenges caused by sargassum by providing equipment such as floating boom barriers, aquatic conveyors, work boats, machine surface beach rakes, tractors, and dump trucks. The project also includes the transfer of expertise and technical knowledge on the collection, removal, transport and disposal of sargassum. Japan as an island country, just like the Caribbean states, shares the common understanding that sustainable coastal environment is fundamental for our life, economy and public health. Our integrated approach at this point is also important when it comes to the post-COVID economic recovery in terms of tourism, fisheries and transportation. Let us continue working together to improve the coastal environment which is vital for us all.”



The Hon. Adrian Forde, Minister of Environment and National Beautification of Barbados expressed, on behalf of his government, his “heartfelt and immeasurable thanks to the Government of Japan and UNDP for realizing this noble cause.” He further noted that “we have been challenged over the last few years with an abnormal influx [of Sargassum seaweed] due to the impacts of climate change and the effects on our marine life and our fisheries and tourism sectors are numerous. I am happy today to champion this cause on behalf of our country Barbados and look forward to the partnership.”

Speaking to the importance of projects like these while highlighting the ever-increasing effects of climate change, Ms. Valerie Cliff, UNDP's Resident Representative, stated, "The now almost seasonal influx of Sargassum Seaweed, when paired with the current adverse effects of climate change, like sea level rise and ocean acidification, further increases the vulnerability of SIDS. However, through the generous support of the government of Japan, Caribbean governments can make greater strides in not only removing but understanding this phenomenon and enhancing regional capacity to handle it moving forward."



This initiative will boost marine and near-shore coastal conservation efforts, support integrated coastal management actions, and mitigate the negative impacts on sectors such as fisheries, public health, and tourism. It is expected to run for a period of three years.

➤ UNDP press release

<https://www.bb.undp.org/content/barbados/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2022/japan-and-undp-support-caribbeans-search-for-a-sargassum-seaweed.html>

➤ Caribbean Broadcasting Cooperation

<https://www.cbc.bb/cbctest/news/local-news/japan-helping-to-find-solutions-to-sargassum-seaweed-challenge/>

➤ Barbados Government Information Service

<https://gisbarbados.gov.bb/blog/barbados-benefits-from-us2-million-for-sargassum-fight/>

➤ Barbados today

<https://barbadostoday.bb/2022/02/19/caribbeans-seaweed-project-gets-boost-from-japan/>