In a recent address to the 20th Conference of Parties (COP 20) of the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change, Dr the Hon. James Fletcher, St Lucia’s Minister for Sustainable Development Science and Technology reiterated the need to scale up climate financing as a critical action leading up to 2020, when the Green Climate Fund is expected to be capitalized at the level of US$100 billion.

To achieve this scaling up of financing, Dr Fletcher suggested the following actions:

(i) clearly defining climate finance to ensure it includes only new and additional funding;

(ii) ensuring transparency in the provision and use of the funds;

(iii) exploring innovative sources of finance such as carbon offsets, auctioning of carbon allowances and carbon taxes; and

(iv) seeking a commitment to simplify preconditions for access, as well as improving and prioritizing such access by Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Fletcher concluded that too many countries in the Caribbean are forced to resort to ‘debt financing to deal with ex-ante adaptation requirements and the ex-post cost of recovering from damage and destruction left by extreme events.’

St Vincent Receives Award for Participating in world-wide Campaign to Plant Trees

With RRACC’s funding support, St Vincent participated in a world-wide campaign entitled, Treelympics, which involved the planting of trees, as a means of saving the environment and contributing to efforts at reducing climate change impacts.

The RRACC focal Ministry in St Vincent in collaboration with the Richmond Vale Academy (RVA) steered the planting exercise organized by Environment Online (ENO).

The three activities under the St. Vincent leg of the exercise included: (1) registration of schools for the ENO Treelympics (2) educational sessions at each school through the use of media and (3) tree planting, involving all schools around the island.

Over 80 schools in St Vincent registered and participated in the Tree-planting campaign over a 2 month period.

As a result of the brave and tireless effort, St Vincent won an award for the smallest country to participate in the Treelympics, and for registering more than 90% of schools on the island.

The medal for St Vincent was received in Finland by the Head-Mistress of the RVA, Ms Stina Herberg. In a correspondence Herberg said with great enthusiasm, “Let’s look ahead and plan the Treelympics for Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, Antigua. I am in Finland and the Olympic Games in Tree-planting is set for 2015 - let’s have all OECS countries involved. Shall we? Let’s plant 10 million trees!”

Towards an Articulated Vision for Climate Finance

Funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation is crucial for the Caribbean because the cost of climate change impacts has already exceeded the capacity of the domestic resources of Caribbean nations.

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